



Piloting Snapchat for Finnish Defence Forces

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<p>This thesis is about piloting Snapchat for Finnish Defence Forces.</p> <p>The goals for the thesis are to find out how Snapchat can be used as part of Finnish Defence Forces' social media communication and strategy. Conscripts are the most important target group for social media communication in the Defence Forces. Young conscripts are the main target group for Snapchat.</p> <p>This thesis is theoretically based on organizational communication, stakeholder communication and social media communication.</p> <p>Piloting Snapchat was implemented by action research: Snapchat was piloted in action for three months with two accounts: <i>Ruotuväki</i> and <i>Inttielämää</i>. Both accounts were used entirely by conscripts in service, who planned and published all the content. The goal for Snapchat was to tell ordinary stories of everyday life in the military service from conscripts' point of view.</p> <p>Ruotuväki and especially Inttielämää Snapchat managed to reach young conscripts well. Most of the followers are draftees, conscripts in service, young reservists and young women. Inttielämää Snapchat succeeded well in getting the followers engaged; we get more messages from followers on Snapchat than in any other social media channel used in the Defence Forces.</p> <p>The conclusion is that Snapchat is a good channel for reaching young conscripts. Having conscripts in service to publish on Snapchat is the best way to keep young conscripts interested in the content. The content needs to be authentic and real.</p> <p>The Finnish Defence Forces will continue using Ruotuväki and Inttielämää Snapchat accounts based on the practical guidelines I present in the conclusion part of the thesis.</p>	
Keywords Social media, stakeholder communication, organizational communication, Snapchat	

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1 Introduction

Social media has become an inseparable part of organizational communication. Social media landscape is changing faster than traditional communication channels: New social media channels are born and older channels evolve or even fade.

Organizations need to determine how they want to utilize social media. Understanding organization's stakeholders and their interests and needs as well as understanding the characters of different social media channels is vital in order to apply successful social media strategies.

Snapchat is a fairly new social media channel, which is yet hugely unused by organizations. Snapchat intrigues young people: 60 per cent of Snapchat users are 13–24-year-olds, and it is the most used social media channel among teenagers (Statista, 2016).

For Finnish Defence Forces, teenagers and young conscripts are an important stakeholder group. Because Finland has compulsory military service, all Finnish males will attend the draft and most of them will complete military service. Reaching the conscripts before their service can help reduce prejudice and anxiety that might be related to the service.

Finnish Defence Forces is already very active in social media, where conscripts are one of the biggest target groups. Unfortunately, Finnish Defence Forces hasn't been able reach teenagers and young conscripts well enough. New channels and ways of communicating needed to be explored.

Finnish Defence Forces decided to look into Snapchat.

This study aims at finding out how Snapchat can be used to reach the young conscripts and as part of Finnish Defence Forces' communication and social media strategy. The goal is to make practical guidelines for using Snapchat in Finnish Defence Forces.

In this study I go through different examples of using Snapchat and find benchmarks for Finnish Defence Forces. The study seeks to understand the character of Snapchat and how it can fit in with other social media channels. The study also addresses the advantages and disadvantages of Snapchat and aims at finding out how the conscripts can be reached in Snapchat.

The study is carried out as an action research, where Snapchat is tested in practice. The pilot period is about three months, from June 2016 to September 2016. Snapchat was piloted with two user accounts: *Ruotuväki* and *Inttielämää*. Both accounts were updated by conscripts, not communications professionals.

The opinions and views of the conscripts were vital for the pilot; they had a lot influence over the practical part of piloting Snapchat.

In the end I will explain pilot conclusions and give recommendations for using Snapchat in Finnish Defence Forces.

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction, which is followed by a second chapter: the case organization and theoretical framework the study is based on. Third chapter explains what Snapchat is and gives examples how organizations can use Snapchat. Fourth chapter covers the pilot process in detail. The fifth and final chapter goes through conclusions and recommendations for using Snapchat in Finnish Defence Forces.

2 Context of the study

This chapter covers the introduction of the case organization and its communication.

2.1 Finnish Defence Forces

Finnish Defence Forces is a governmental official with approximately 12 000 employees, of which 4 000 are civilians. Finnish Defence Forces was founded in 1918 and nowadays it has several agencies and centers all over Finland with different operations.

Finland has compulsory military service: every male Finnish citizen is liable for military service starting from the beginning of the year in which he turns 18 until the end of the year he turns 60. Women can complete voluntary military service. Military service concludes of conscript service, refresher training, extra service and service during mobilization and war time. Conscript training produces the Defence Forces' wartime troops. (Finnish Defence Forces 2016).

Military service lasts 165, 255 or 347 days. About 21 000 conscripts complete the service each year (Statement of Human Resources 2015). Conscript training is part of Defence Forces' main tasks.

The Defence Forces has three tasks by law:

1. The military defence of Finland
2. Assistance for other public authorities
3. Participate in international crisis management (Laki puolustusvoimista, 551/2007)

In addition to conscript training, Finland's military defence means monitoring Finland's land and sea areas and airspace and securing its territorial integrity, securing the livelihood and basic rights of the people and the freedom of the government, defending the law (Finnish Defence Forces 2016).

Supporting other authorities means providing assistance to maintain order and security, taking part in rescue activities and taking part in providing assistance to another state in the event of a terrorist attack, natural catastrophe, disaster or other similar event (Finnish Defence Forces 2016).

International military crisis management means participating in crisis management operations.

The Defence Forces has three military branches: the Army, the Navy and the Air Force.

The Army defends the land area of Finland and executes all three of the Defence Forces' tasks. The Army has eight brigade-level units which train around 20 000 conscripts every year. (Finnish Defence Forces 2016.)

The Navy operates at sea and on the coast. It has naval and coastal forces. The Navy monitors territorial integrity at sea and coast, repels maritime attacks and secures maritime traffic. The Navy also trains conscripts. (Finnish Defence Forces 2016.)

The Air Force prevents and repel aerial attacks. The Air Force leads Finland's air defence and is responsible for surveillance and for repelling aerial territorial violations. The Air Force also trains conscripts. (Finnish Defence Forces 2016.)

2.2 Communications at Finnish Defence Forces

Finnish Defence Forces has a strong structural organizational culture; hierarchy has long traditions and even today is self-evident. This can be seen throughout the whole organization – also in communications.

Richard Blundel lists formal organization structures, reporting arrangements and procedures as challenges in organizational communications (Blundel 2004, 2). Surprisingly to me, he argues that the most common communications challenges are similar, whether the organization is operating in the private, public or voluntary sector (Blundel 2004, 3). I had always thought that governmental organizations are much more stiff, old-fashioned and slower to change than private companies. For that reason, I had also thought that communications in governmental organizations is more careful and more difficult than in the private sector; that private companies would be faster to try out new channels and methods. But according to Blundel (2004, 3), this is not the case.

In Finnish Defence Forces, communications is directed by the Public Information Division, which is located at the Finnish Defence Command. Each military branch and administrative unit has their own communications departments and communications staff in different units and brigades. There are approximately 70 people overall working in communications in Finnish Defence Forces.

Communication at Finnish Defence Forces is guided by laws and norms. The first communication norm 001 PUOLUSTUSVOIMIEN VIESTINTÄ (HL1321) aligns that “the goal of Finnish Defence Forces’ communication is to support Finnish Defence Forces’ management with internal and external communication during peace time and time of crises” (HL1321 2015, 4). The norm states that proactive, open and interactive internal communication is the basis of Finnish Defence Forces’ reputation and creates the conditions for the external communication to succeed. In practice, the communication needs to be understandable, reliable and timely. (HL1321 2015, 5.) One of the most important goals is to widen the knowledge of Defence Forces’ tasks and the implementation of tasks in the Finnish society (HL 1321 2015, 9).

Richard Blundel would agree at least with this part of the Defence Forces norm; he states that the rewards for effective communication are for example satisfied repeat customers (in this case, for example, the conscripts doing the military service), well-motivated employees and a positive reputation in the wider community (Blundel 2004, 2).

The norm gives the communication principles for the entire organization. It states the hierarchy, responsibilities and tasks of different operators and sets the grounds for planning the communications in each branch. The norm requires that when making a communication plan, it should include the goals of communication, key and supportive messages, target groups, channels, follow-up and analyzing and responsibilities of each actors (HL 1321 2015, 11).

Stakeholders are defined clearly in the communication norms, but instead of stakeholders, they are called target groups. For that reason, from now on, I will use the term ‘target group’ when talking about communication at Finnish Defence Forces.

The main target groups of the Defence Forces are:

Internal target groups:

1. Employees
2. Conscripts (draftees, conscripts in service, reservists)
3. Crisis management staff
4. Strategic partners.

External target groups:

1. Decision makers and influencers in society
2. Conscripts’ relatives and other citizens
3. Media

4. Partners and other interest groups
 5. National defence organizations and NGOs.
- (HL 1321 2015, 11)

The channels for communication are:

- Website
- Intranet
- Social media

The norm doesn't only concern communications professionals, but all employees, since it says that every employee is responsible for the reputation of Finnish Defence Forces (HL 1321 2015, 10). Good reputation includes, for example, high quality training for the conscripts, international operations, managerial culture and employer image (HL 1321 2015, 10).

The norm refers to Defence Administration's communication strategy, which aligns that every public officer is responsible for communication. The responsibility affiliates with the public officer's field of expertise. The communication of large subjects should be carried out in co-operation with the subject experts and communications professionals (HL 1321 2015, 6.)

Each administrative unit in Finnish Defence Forces is responsible for planning and implementing their own communication. Implementation is based on long-term planning which considers Finnish Defence Forces' values, themes, communicational operations and the graphic guidelines (HL 1321 2015, 11.)

Finnish Defence Forces' communication is divided into three sections: long-term planning, daily communication and reputation management (HL 1321 2015, 9–10.)

The norm also states that regular evaluation is an important part of communication.

2.2.1 Social media in Finnish Defence Forces

Like all communication in the Defence Forces, also social media is guided by norms. The norm for online and social media communication states that the main channel for communication is Finnish Defence Forces' website, and social media channels are in a supportive role (Puolustusvoimat sosiaalisessa mediassa 2014, 1).

The goals for social media channels are:

1. To communicate about Finnish Defence Forces' tasks
2. To share information openly, timely and reliably
3. To share Finnish Defence Forces and military service experiences by stories, pictures and videos
4. To optimize and lighten customer service by using the social media to reach big audiences and to have interaction.

(Puolustusvoimat sosiaalisessa mediassa 2014, 1)

Reaching the goals require smooth and interactive communication and focusing on target groups when the using different social media channels. Reaching especially the conscripts not yet in service requires presence in social media channels.

(Puolustusvoimat sosiaalisessa mediassa 2014, 1.)

During the time of this pilot, Finnish Defence Forces was using five social media channels: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Youtube. Periscope was being piloted at the same time. Even though reaching the conscripts who are not yet in military service is mentioned several times in the norms and strategy, my experience from the Defence Forces' social media communication is different. Having worked for the Defence Forces more than three years I can say that I don't think we reach the young people well enough. Out of the social media channels, Instagram has probably been most effective to reach 15–19-year-olds – but not effective enough.

Picture 3 shows the official social media channels of Finnish Defence Forces in autumn 2016. Military music is not included in this picture even though they are using social media. Twitter and Facebook are the most used channels. Finnish Defence Forces, each branch of defence, National Defence University (MPKK), the chief of defence (PVKOM) and Ruotuväki have Twitter accounts. The picture shows that Periscope and Snapchat are being piloted.

Kanava	PV	Puolustus- haarat	MPKK	PVKOM	Someagentit	Some varusmiehet	Muut
Facebook	x	x	tulossa		Suljetut saapumiserä- ryhmät		Urheilukoulu, Pvrekryointi Ruotuväki
Twitter	x	x	x	x			Ruotuväki
Instagram	x		x			Inttielämää	Ruotuväki
Periscope	pilotti						
Snapchat	pilotti					Inttielämää	Ruotuväki
YouTube	x						*Combat Camera
LinkedIn	x						*PVPALVK

Picture 4. Finnish Defence Force's official social media channels (2016).

Most of Finnish Defence Forces' social media channels are used by communications professionals. The only exceptions are Inttielämää Instagram, which has content produced also by conscripts, and all Ruotuväki social media channels.

Social media is used to share information, stories and feelings related to the Defence Forces and military life. It is also used as a customer service: questions are answered. Facebook and Twitter are now, along with email, important channels for customer service, since citizens use them for questions.

Even though social media is already a common way of communicating in the Defence Forces, I think it is often used conservatively. Finnish Defence Forces is an official authority and therefore of course needs to act like one, but the character of social media is different than traditional communication. More relaxed and even humorous style could sometimes be in place. In order to master social media, you have to let go of the illusion of control and instead embrace dialogue and accept criticism and unfriendly messages.

The Defence Forces' social media strategy was accepted in 2011. Already then one of the social media goals was to give a face to the military service (for young people who haven't done the service yet). Other goals were communication with reservists and citizens and efficient customer service. (Sosiaalisen median strategia 2011, 7.)

The main target groups for social media are:

1. Conscripts
2. Citizens
3. Media

(Sosiaalisen median strategia 2011, 7.)

Like all communication, also social media holds risks. As a security authority, Finnish Defence Forces has to pay careful attention to operational security. Training employees to use social media is important. Also teaching the conscripts in service and reservists about operational security and what it means in social media is important. The social media guidelines for conscripts and reservists says, for example, that when in service, you are not allowed use gps or other location finders in your phone. Taking pictures in military areas is also restricted. (Sosiaalisessa mediassa toiminnan ohje varusmiehille ja reserviläisille, 1–2.)

2.2.2 Ruotuväki

Ruotuväki is the newspaper of Finnish Defence Forces. Ruotuväki was founded in 1962 and it comes out 22 times a year, and every weekday online. Ruotuväki is almost completely done by conscripts who serve as reporters, photographers, graphic designer and distribution secretary: ten conscripts and three employees as total.

Ruotuväki is located in the Public Information Division in the Finnish Defence Command. There are three employees: editor-in-chief and two associates editors, one for the newspaper and one for online news and social media.

The main target groups for Ruotuväki newspaper are conscripts in service, reservists, Finnish Defence Forces employees and citizens interested in defence issues. The circulation of the print newspaper is approximately 23 000 and Ruotuväki's website has approximately 10 000 – 13 000 monthly users. Picture 5 shows Ruotuväki cover (18/16). Ruotuväki is distributed to all Defence Forces' branches and units, to various stakeholders and to private subscribers.



Picture 5. The cover of Ruotuväki newspaper 18/16.

Ruotuväki's main purpose is to tell the news about Finnish Defence Forces, national defence issues and security policy. By telling the news the paper also aims at keeping the defence spirit in Finland high. One of the most important peace-time tasks is to train the conscripts serving in the newspaper and to make them capable reservists in the field of media and communication.

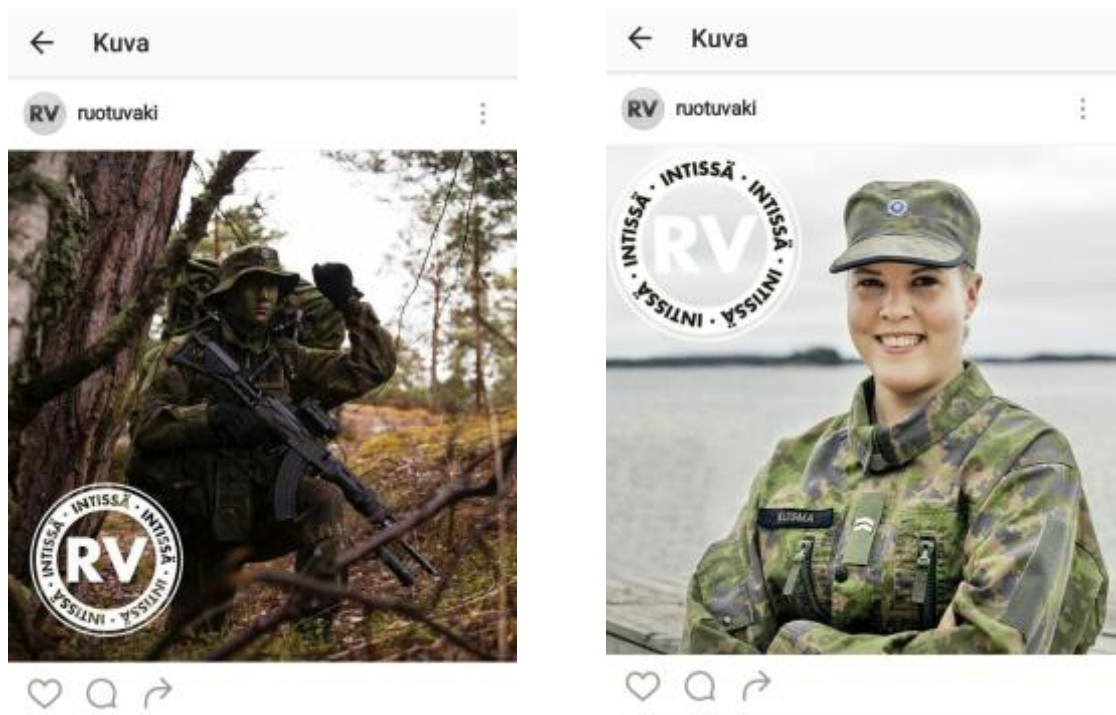
Since Ruotuväki is done mostly by young conscripts, who constantly have new ideas and are naturals to the social media and digital world, it is easier to try new things and new ways of doing old things within the newspaper. Ruotuväki regularly has different campaigns in social media, like competitions or theme days.

Even though Ruotuväki is the official newspaper of Finnish Defence Forces, all decisions are made inside the paper, ultimately by the editor-in-chief. This flat and simple structure, quite unique in the military, makes it easier for the paper to make fast decisions and have pilot projects – for example new social media channels. Ruotuväki is also a known brand outside the Defence Forces, and our target groups know it is made by conscripts. Based on the newspaper's character and working methods, Ruotuväki was a natural choice for piloting a new social media channel.

2.2.3 Ruotuväki in social media

Ruotuväki uses five social media channels: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube and now for the piloting project, Snapchat. In Youtube Ruotuväki doesn't have its own account, but uses Defence Force's user account when publishing news videos. All the paper's own social media channels are updated by the conscripts serving in Ruotuväki.

Ruotuväki opened its Instagram account in the beginning of 2014, and it was the first official Instagram account of the Defence Forces. Since Instagram was then mostly used by teenagers and young adults, it was decided that Ruotuväki's Instagram profile would be different from Twitter and Facebook. When in Twitter and Facebook news stories and other articles are shared and questions are answered, Instagram is basically only concentrated on to telling the stories of the conscripts serving in the military. For example, Ruotuväki uses pictures from every-day life of conscripts and short captions to tell the story. Originally created for Facebook, Intissä (in the military) stories were also shared in Instagram. Intissä stories have pictures of conscripts in service and in the caption they tell about their day.



Picture 6. Examples of "Intissä" pictures in Instagram. Conscript's interview would be in the caption.

Both in Facebook and Instagram, Intissä stories quickly became the most liked and viewed posts. It was obvious that ordinary stories of the everyday life of conscripts in the service interested our audience in social media – and also in our website. Feature stories from the field describing the life of conscripts are our most read articles online.

Intissä stories, with the stamp, was created by the conscripts in Ruotuväki. Since they are in the military at the time, they are far better experts on that particular audience than, for example, the staff is. Intissä stories are a great example of content invented and produced by conscripts that actually work as independent stories in social media.

Based on Ruotuväki's Instagram experiences, Inttielämää Instagram account was opened by the Public Information Division later in 2014. The goal was to reach young conscripts.

3 Literature review

The chapter covers communication in general, organizational communication, stakeholder communication and social media. In this study organizational communication is important, because the piloting of Snapchat happens in an organizational environment. Snapchat is a new social media channel, and it is being piloted for stakeholder communication, which is why understanding social media and stakeholder communication is vital. Especially understanding the specific stakeholder group for Snapchat, the young conscripts, is important.

In this thesis I use the terms *communication* and *communications*. I define and use them as follows:

Communication means any kind of communication that we practice: words, gestures, expressing feelings and thoughts, sharing information, having a dialogue. It can be a phone call, face-to-face conversation, e-mail or a comment on a social media site. This includes, for example, organizational communication.

Communications is the professional line of business: it's the professional way of practicing communication in organizations. It includes, for example, channels and employees.

3.1 Communication

As long as there have been living creatures on earth, there has been communication. We cannot survive one day as part of families, societies, work places or other social units without communicating. According to Mumby (2013, 14) communication is "the dynamic, ongoing process of creating and negotiating meanings through interactional symbolic (verbal and nonverbal) practices, including conversation, metaphors, rituals, stories, dress, and space".

All communication has pretty much the same goal: to forward your thought, idea, feeling etc. to another person and to get that person react back. If the reaction is what you were hoping for, your communication has succeeded. If it is not, the receiver has not understood the message the way you meant it; the message is interpreted by the receiver differently. Richard Blundel (2004, 25) writes that as communicators, we are almost always over-optimistic about our messages, assuming that they will survive unscathed, when actually our messages are affected by the 'noise'.

The noise, in communication theory, means pretty much anything that can interrupt or distort a message so that it fails to reach the receiver in its original form (Blundel 2004, 5). The noise can be an actual, physical interruption or it can even be the difference between the message sender's and receiver's background: for example, a culture, language or education. The receiver can simply have different meanings for different words or topics or is interpreting non-verbal signs differently.

So learning how to communicate is basically learning about people. In my study it is important to understand the stakeholder group in question: the young conscripts. Social media as a communication channel changes the communication as well; it is different to interpret social media messages than talking to people face-to-face.

There are also differences between social medias – according to Hayes, Carr and Wohn (2016, 173), individuals interpret identical messages differently depending on the context of the social network site in which the message is observed.

“Given the value of a social medium and its affordances to users seem to be idiosyncratic by site, the meaning and motivations behind use of a technological affordance may, too, be idiosyncratic, as users may utilize similar affordances to achieve different goals or communicate different intended meaning across various services.” (Hayes, Carr & Wohn 2016, 173.)

Snapchat is used mostly for sending pictures and videos that can have written messages in them. There are many ways a receiver of Snapchat message, a snap, can interpret it differently than the sender meant it. A picture can be even more difficult than words interpret the way the sender meant it. A picture is always taken in a certain situation, which the receiver doesn't necessarily see or understand. This is something I need to take into consideration when analyzing Snapchat content.

I say communication is always, *a/ways*, goal-oriented. You communicate for a reason; you want something with it. Whether it is just to connect with people, make them understand you, or to make people act in a certain way, you have some goal in mind. The same is true with organizational communication.

3.2 Organizational communication

Dennis Mumby (2013, 15) defines organizational communication as “the process of creating and negotiating collective, coordinated systems of meaning through symbolic

practices oriented toward the achievement of organizational goals". Mumby (2013) sees organization and communication are in symbiosis with one another; that each produces and is produced by the other. To simplify this Mumby's definition, organization cannot exist without communication and communication doesn't happen without the organization.

The purpose of communication is to help the organization reach its goals through various actions. So basically communication in an organization is always in a supportive role: it needs to help reach goals and implement strategies. Communication itself is not the point, but what an organization can achieve through it.

Joep Cornelissen describes organizational communication from more practical point of view, and he uses the term corporate communication. According to Cornelissen (2011, 5), corporate communication is managerial function responsible for overseeing and coordinating the work done by communication practitioners in different functions, such as media relations, public affairs and internal communication. Being a managerial function means that organizational communication includes many practical tasks in addition to the actual communication.

Every organization needs to make decisions about how much resources they want to direct to communications. Communication can seem demanding and time-consuming, because in order to be effective, communication requires each participant to make an effort to understand the other. However, effective communication is definitely worthwhile. (Blundel 2004, 2.)

Blundel (2004, 2) explains that with communication, an organization can achieve, for example, happy customers, motivated employees, more positive reputation in the community and innovative strategies that lead to better results.

There are many things that affect organizational communication. Blundel (2004, 2) lists few:

- Formal organizational structure and procedures
- Cultural diversity among people, departments and stakeholders
- Political, financial and time pressure
- Managerial priorities and demands.

Finnish Defence Forces, for example, has a very strong organizational structure and procedures, which had to be taken into account while doing this study. It is an old and traditional organization, which previously has been quite careful with communication. This

has changed during the past years – communication is more open and proactive – but the organization remains quite traditional. This is a challenge when trying to communicate with young people, who are naturals in social media and digital world, and have grown up in a global, open world where everything is connected.

Organizational communication can be divided into different categories. Traditionally, communication has been divided into internal and external communication. This division is based on the idea that communication participants can clearly be defined as being inside or outside of the organization (Juholin 2009, 40). However, many argue that this division is outdated; that participants cannot be clearly placed either inside or outside. Also Juholin agrees that the line between participants is not very clear. Digitalization has also changed internal communication: internal messages become external very quickly online, for example, when an employee decides to publish something on his/her social media channel.

Organizational communication can be categorized based on the purpose of the communication. ProCom, Union of Communication Professionals, categorizes organizational communication as follows:

- Goal-directed and interactive strategy work
 - Probing, interpreting and reacting (recognize relevant internal and external changes in time and take them into account in planning and decision making)
 - Making visible (the goals, action, products, services, decisions etc.)
 - Networking (professional, all-around and interactive communication creates common understanding and visions between organization and stakeholders)
 - Tuning (to advice and guide the organization in communication)
- (ProCom, 2012.)

This kind of approach demonstrates how diverse communications really is: it's widely connected to different functions of the organization. This approach very close to Cornelissen's definition (2011, 5) of corporate communication; ProCom's list is about the practical functions good organizational communication requires. Communications in organizations is much more than just communication.

3.3 Stakeholder communication

Every organization has stakeholders. Freeman in Welch & Jackson (2007, 183) defines stakeholders as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives".

There are different kind of stakeholders – for example, employees, customers, media, officials, NGOs and so on. According to Elisa Juholin (2009, 199), an organization earns, fortifies or weakens its legitimacy by the assessment of its stakeholders. Cornelissen (2011, 3) concurs with this statement: he says that in today's society the future of any company critically depends on how it is viewed by its key stakeholders.

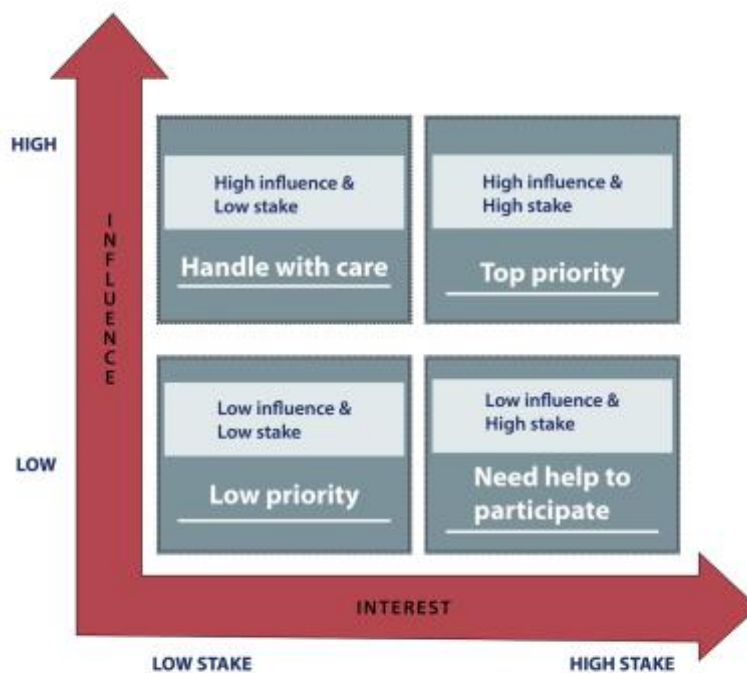
For example, Finnish Defence Forces could weaken its legitimacy in the eyes of its stakeholders if they wouldn't handle the conscript training well and professionally. Conscripts talk about the service to their families and friends and share their experiences in social media, and if more and more would talk bad things about the service, it would weaken the trust. By taking care of the conscripts while they are in service and making sure the training is good quality, Finnish Defence Forces can fortify its legitimacy. This is also why the conscripts in service are one of the most important stakeholder groups for the Defence Forces: the conscripts have first-hand experience about Finnish Defence Forces and they will talk about their experiences. In a way, the conscripts are the best business card that Finnish Defence Forces has to show to the Finnish society.

Each stakeholder has different motives and interests; they need different kind of communication. When planning stakeholder communication, an organization can, for example, define stakeholders by their character and importance to the organization. It's important to know what kind of demands, needs and expectations different stakeholders have, and on the other hand, what goals the organization has towards the stakeholders (Juholin 2009, 202).

There are different ways of categorizing stakeholders. One is categorizing them based on their influence and interest in the organization and its interests. The ranking in the influence and interest lines defines the importance of the stakeholder group for the organization. The interest line means the group's interest towards the organization and the influence line shows the amount of influence the group has over the organization. As the picture 1 shows, there are roughly four stakeholder categories based on this categorization.

The group that needs the least attention from the organization is the one that has low influence and low interest in the organization. They are a low priority. Another group is the one that has high influence but low interest. For example, some decision makers could be in this category, like members of parliament who are not interested in the defence subjects. They need to be handled carefully and communicated with specifically.

Third group is one with low influence but high stake: conscripts are in this category. They cannot really influence the organization but since they are bind by law to complete military service, they certainly are a high stake group for Finnish Defence Forces. The fourth, and most important, group is the one that have high influence and high interest, and therefor is the group with the highest stake. The members of the government are definitely in this group: they can influence the defence budget and laws considering Finnish Defence Forces. They usually are also very interested in these questions and want to influence them.



Picture 1. Stakeholder mapping tool (based on influence and interest). Adapted from European Commission (2015).

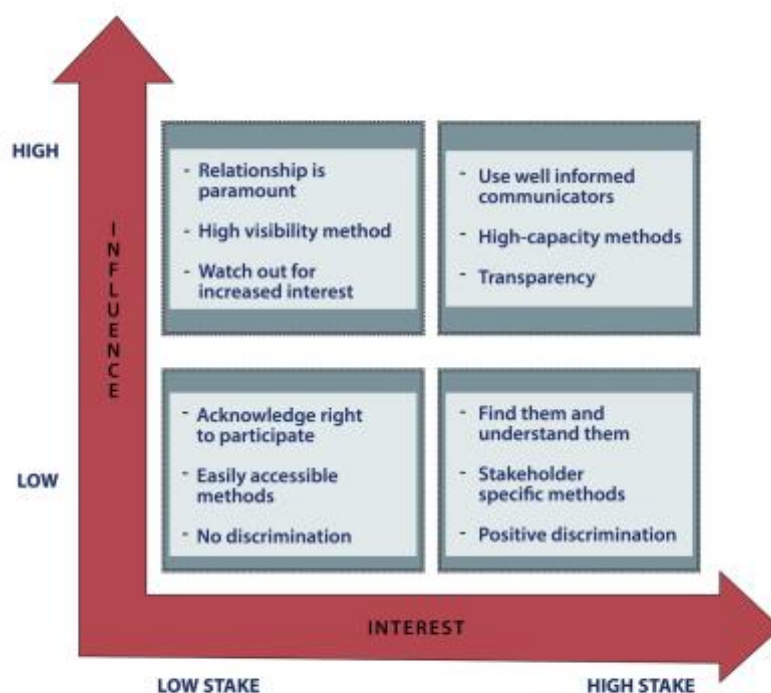
Depending on the influence and interest level, an organization can decide which communication channels, tools and messages to use for each stakeholder group and how much resources to direct. The higher the stake is in the mapping tool, the more attention and concentration the stakeholder needs. Part of the stakeholder analysis is to learn to understand the different stakeholders, their needs and expectations.

The picture 2 shows what kind of methods could be chosen for different stakeholder groups. For the low stake group, it's important to acknowledge their existence and accept their right to participate. This could be done in social media, for example, by answering questions and having a dialogue with people who comment on the organization's social media sites. The high influence low interest group, for example members of parliament,

need more attention and effort. Having direct contact and relationship with the is important.

The most important group, high influence and high interest, needs specific and carefully planned methods. However, this communication also needs to be done with transparency. Communicating with the members of government could happen, for example, by specialists who inform the members of government about top priority defence and security police issues. Even though transparency is important, in the matters of defence some things are not public information. Having a relationship based on trust, where sensitive and confidential issues can be discussed, is important.

The low influence high interest group is the one that is most important for this study, since conscripts are in that group. I will cover that group more thoroughly later in this chapter.



Picture 2. Stakeholder mapping tool. Adapted from European Commission (2015).

The purpose of planning stakeholder communication is to find the right and optimal practices and ways for each stakeholder group (Juholin 2007, 207). Cornelissen (2011, 44) explains that in practice stakeholder communication means providing stakeholders with the type of information about the organization that they are interested in. This can be tricky, because “the interests of stakeholders are intricately varied, and at times are even at odds with one another” (Cornelissen 2011, 44). But it is important to have a relationship

with each stakeholder group; to build a strong reputation among the stakeholders (Cornelissen 2011, 44).

With young conscripts, who might not be interested in Finnish Defence Forces to begin with, it's about finding the right channel and right way of delivering the message – and finding the right message. Even if a conscript would be reluctant to attend the service, the odds are that he is curious about the service. Communicating about conscripts' everyday life is likely to be interesting to him.

For this pilot the young conscripts are the most important stakeholder group. They include draftees, conscripts in service, and young reservists. In a way the conscripts are an easy stakeholder group to reach, because each young man has to attend a draft and most men do the military service. The Defence Forces can actually meet them face-to-face: first in the draft, and then in the service every day until conscripts have completed the service. However, the conscripts don't really have influence over Finnish Defence Forces or military service, since it is a law. But military service affects almost 21 000 young men and few hundred voluntary women every year, so even though they don't have influence, they are a high stake group for the Defence Forces, because they are such a big stakeholder group who are in close contact with the organization during the service. Not putting effort in communicating with the conscripts would be like a university deciding not to communicate with its students – the only difference is that the students have applied to the university and are there voluntarily. But even then some of them might not be interested in studying, just like some of the conscripts might not be interested in the military service.

The fact that many conscripts might not be very interested in the Defence Forces, especially when there is still some time before the service begins, is of course a challenge. Or they might be interested to learn about the service, but they don't use the same channels or understand the Defence Forces' official way of communicating.

One might wonder why should Finnish Defence Forces even try to reach the conscripts before the service; they will be reached eventually, when they start the service.

Cornelissen (2011, 44) argued that it is important to have a relationship and strong reputation across all stakeholders and Juholin (2009, 199) explained that an organization can weaken its legitimacy by the assessment of its stakeholders. As stated before, young conscripts are an important stakeholder group and the Defence Forces can't afford to neglect such a group.

Training the conscripts is the biggest task of Finnish Defence Forces. The goal is to train motivated and professional reservists who are capable of fulfilling their tasks in a time of war. This goal is not very simple; it requires motivated and interested conscripts. That's why getting the conscripts engaged already before the service is important – to make them more motivated, get them interested and feeling like their voices are being heard in the Defence Forces. Many young conscripts might be nervous or anxious about the service. Communicating to them before the service and showing what the service is like can reduce anxiety and help creating a more realistic or even positive image of the service.

Finnish Defence Forces has, of course, always communicated with the conscripts. But it has traditionally been very official and formal communicating, for example in the draft. This way of communicating doesn't reach the young conscripts well enough or get them engaged with the organization. The stakeholder mapping tool (picture 2) says that with this stakeholder group you need to find them, understand them and use stakeholder specific methods. This is why Snapchat was chosen for piloting: many young conscripts are in Snapchat and using it actively. Snapchat is where we can find them, and using a new channel just for one stakeholder group is a stakeholder specific method.

This stakeholder group is also digital native group. Marc Prensky (2001) explains that digital natives are the first generation to grow up with new technology. They have never known a world without computers, smart phones and other high technologies. They have learned to process mainly digital information and that's why, Prensky argues (2001), today's young people think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors. Young conscripts, who we are trying to reach, process information differently than the conscripts before them. If we want to get through to the digital natives, we have to speak the same language and wrap the message in a package they are willing to open.

In their pilot study, Julia Friedl and Ana Tkalac Vercic (2010), point out that companies should not ignore the specific needs and expectations of digital natives. Even though they discovered that not all employees under the age of 30 are completely immersed in digital technology, one of their study conclusions concerning social media was that social media adoption in internal communication is developing more slowly than in people's personal lives (2010). This seems tangible – I have met many conscripts in service who don't use social media at all. For example, in our pilot there were three conscripts who didn't use social media and had to be taught how to use Snapchat. But most of the conscripts do, and they are the first to try new channels, for instance Snapchat. But naturally

organizations can never be as fast as individuals, who can decide to try a channel in one second and then stop using it just as fast.

3.4 The rise of social media

Katri Lietsala and Esa Sirkkunen define social media as a web service that receive most of the content from their users or that aggregate the content from other sites as feeds (2008, 13). One key element is that in social media, each user can be a content producer, but not everyone sees themselves as producers, but more like participants (Lietsala, Sirkkunen 2008. 13).

In other words, social media is an interactive platform, where individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content (Kietzmann, Harmkens, McCarthy, Silvestre 2011. 241).

There are many different social media sites, and they can be categorized, for example, based on their character. Lietsala and Sirkkunen have used the following categories:

Content creation and publishing (blogs, v-blogs, podcasts), *content sharing* (Flickr, YouTube, del.icio.us, Digg.com), *social network sites* (LinkedIn, Facebook, Match.com, Friendster, MySpace, IRC-Galleria), *collaborative productions* (OhmyNews, Wikipedia, Star-Wreck etc.), *virtual worlds* (Second Life, Habbo Hotel, WOW) and *add-ons* (RockYou, Slide, Friends For Sale). (2008, 13.)

When this category was made, Snapchat didn't exist. But by these definitions, Snapchat would be a combination of *content creation and publishing* and *social network sites*. Snapchat is used, for example, for pictures, short videos, so basically v-blogs (content creation and publishing), and chatting directly with friends (social network sites).

Social media has changed the field of communications just in a few years. In an article "6 ways social media is changing the world", Farida Vis (2016) writes that social media has gone from "nice to have" to an essential component of any business strategy. Social media is no longer for a small team, but it affects the way the whole organization runs (Vis 2016).

For many companies this is a totally new situation. Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silverstre (2011, 242) argue that social media has democratized corporate communication. The power is no longer only in the hands of marketing and public relations: it has been taken by the individuals and communities that create, share, and

consume blogs, tweets, Facebook entries, movies, pictures and so on. Macnamara and Zerfass (2012, 13) point out that communication practitioners are concerned about the loss of control over messages and image building in social media; this is seen as major obstacle and risk in using social media.

But communication about brands happen whether the company is part of it or not. The companies can merely decide to participate or ignore. (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy & Silverstre 2011, 242.)

Ignoring, in my opinion, is almost like driving your car with your eyes closed: by not seeing other cars or possible obstacles will not make them disappear. Your odds of crashing are much higher than if you'd drive your eyes open. Still, even with eyes open, sometimes you crash.

Participating in social media requires new thinking: companies and organizations need to let go of the idea of control. You cannot control what people say about you in social media, and you cannot make it disappear by ignoring it. Instead you can participate, engage in a dialogue and share your own message. When successful, this creates positive reactions and helps to build a positive image of the company.

This has not been very easy for many companies. Even though social media can be very powerful, many executives are reluctant or unable to develop strategies or find resources for effective social media communication (Kietzmann, Harmkens, McCarthy, Silvestre 2011, 242).

3.4.1 Practical challenges with social media communication

Without proper resources it's useless to expect results. All functions, including communication, depend heavily on what resources are available within the organization, including money, human resources, and time (Argenti 2013, 32).

With social media communication, time and human resources affect the most. Human resources include the number of people and their know-how of their profession. When for millennials social media is just as natural way of communicating as talking, for communications professionals who have made their careers before the rise of social media or even Internet have had to cope with the sudden change of the nature of their profession. Employees' know-how and constant learning is more important now than it has ever been before.

Argenti argues that typically too few are assigned to deal with communication tasks, and those assigned are often inexperienced and unqualified (2013, 32). One way to support inexperienced employees is to offer communicational training. For example, social media can seem overwhelming at first, but anyone can learn the basics of using different social media channels.

However, many organizations miss the great opportunity that social media gives them. According to Sprout Social, 7 in 8 social messages to brands go unanswered within 72 hours (Caravella, A. 2015). Customers and other stakeholders expect to be answered and engaged with in social media. Even though social media is an excellent tool for customer service and stakeholder communication, many ignore the messages they get or they don't put in the extra effort to do a great job in social media. Caravella argues that despite realization of the value of social media, many brands fail to institute a fully functioning social communication strategy (Caravella 2015).

In their research about social media usage in corporate communication, Macnamara and Zerfass (2012, 10) found out that there were lack of policies and guidelines on social media by employees, also lack of monitoring social media content and lack of training and support for staff. Their study found out that "only 20 per cent of Australasian organizations and 23 per cent of European organizations have an overarching social media strategy or policy outlining the objectives of social media use" (2016, 11).

One problem with social media communication is the lack of understanding the audience. Richard Blundel writes that an "effective communication requires an open mind (i.e. willingness to take on new and unfamiliar ideas)" (Blundel 2004, 1). He continues arguing that if you are not open to the needs of your audience and the context of the communication, your best efforts to communicate are likely to fail (Blundel 2004, 1). This is probably why Finnish Defence Forces hasn't been able to reach or engage the young conscripts well enough through the existing social media channels – the organization doesn't understand the digital native group of young people.

Marc Prensky (2001) claims that the older generation, which he calls digital immigrants, speak an outdated, pre-digital, language. Digital natives, Prensky argues, are used to receiving information really fast. They like to parallel process and multi-task, and they prefer graphics before their text (2001.) Snapchat is fast and it combines pictures, videos, texts and graphics. So basically Snapchat is the product of digital natives – it's no wonder it has become so popular among young people.

Increasing number of organizations master the most popular social media channels – although many tend to use them quite non-social way – and know what kind of content suits the channel, but how many really know what kind of content interests the audience? If you only use social media as a new channel, because you know your audience is there, but fail to understand why and how your audience is there, your communication in social media is likely to fail, just like Blundel (2004) argued.

One of the biggest target groups for Finnish Defence Forces are conscripts; it's important to understand their interests and needs.

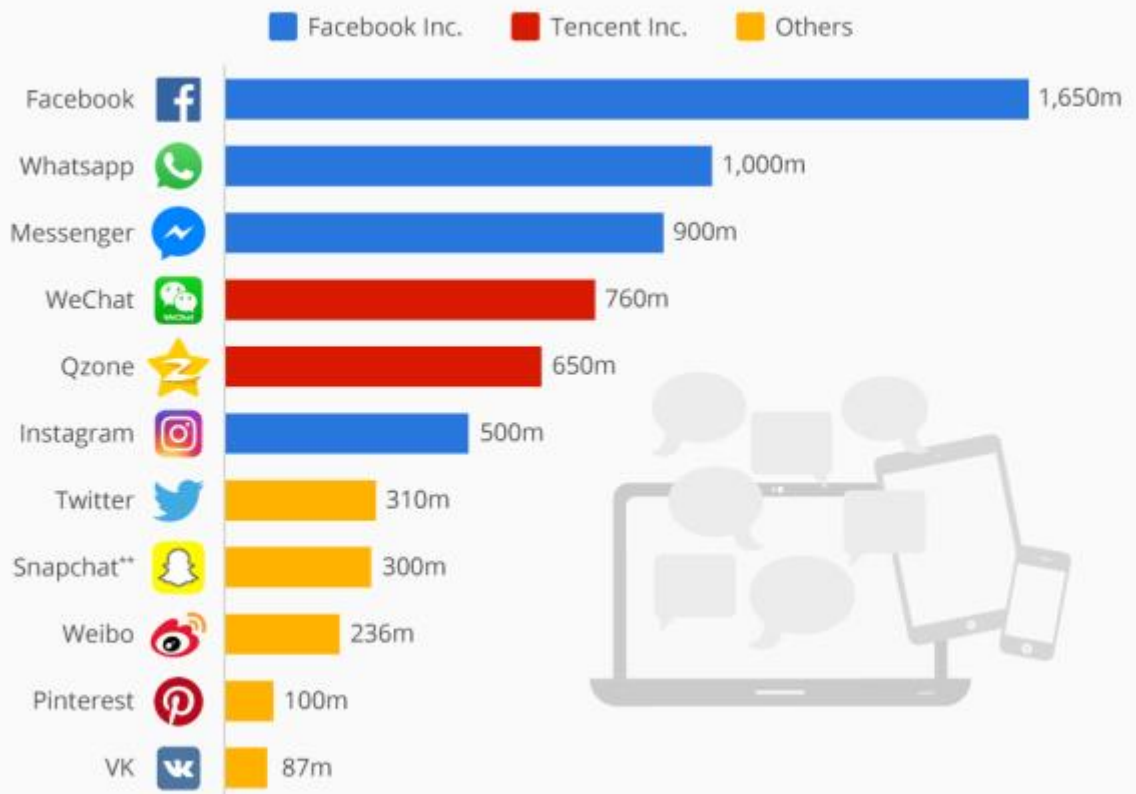
3.4.2 Facebook is still rules social media landscape

There are increasing number of social media channels to choose from. The leader, by far, is still Facebook, with 1 650 million active users (latest data June 2016) (Richter, F 2016). And that is not all – Facebook Inc. owns WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook Messenger making it the most influential social media company.

The picture 3 shows that Instagram has approximately 500 million active users, which is almost 200 million more than Twitter. Snapchat is also gaining on Twitter with estimated 300 million users (Richter 2016).

Facebook Inc. Dominates the Social Media Landscape

Monthly active users of selected social networks and messaging services*



CC BY ND
@StatistaCharts

* latest available data (Dec. 2015 - Jun. 2016)

** estimate

Sources: Company Information; Statista Digital Market Outlook

statista

Picture 3. Statista statistics of social media channels. Retrieved 25 August 2016 (Richter 2016).

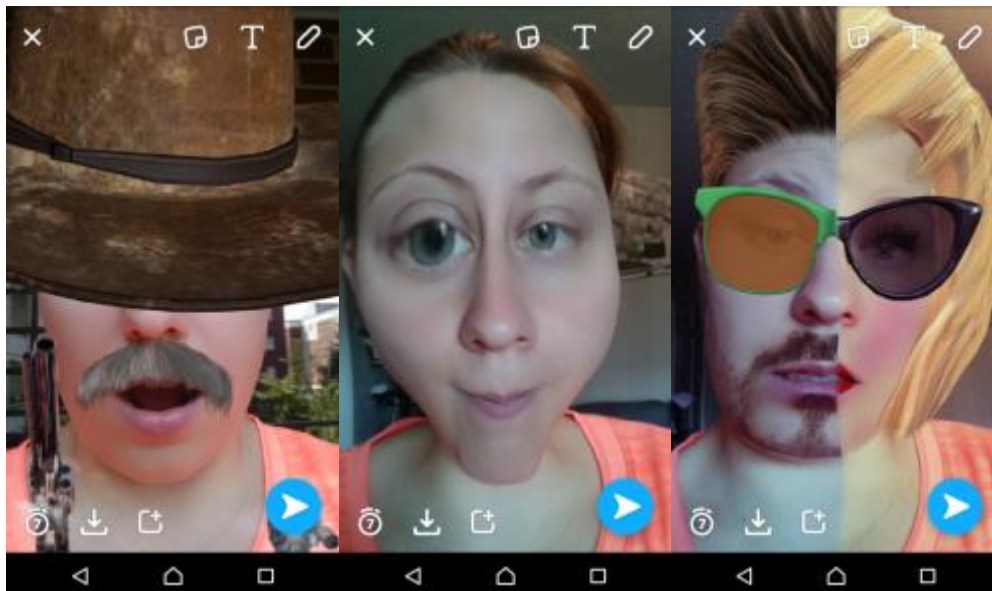
4 Snapchat

In this chapter I will explain what kind of channel Snapchat is and ponder why it has gained popularity among young people. I will show examples how different organizations, Yle Sports and Demi magazine, have used Snapchat to reach and engage their target groups. The character of Snapchat will also be discussed.

4.1 What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is kind of the combination of WhatsApp and Instagram – it's a chat service that you can use to send pictures or short videos to your friends or publish them in your Mystory, where all your followers can see them. The posts – or snaps – can only be seen maximum of 24 hours before they disappear. You can use for example drawings, stickers or emojis to edit your photos or videos. Videos can be up to 10 seconds long, but you can take several videos in a row. To have a little fun you can use different lenses to goof around (Snapchat 2016.)

Picture 7 shows different examples of lenses that have been available in Snapchat. There are new lenses available almost every day, and old ones disappear. I think that the changing lenses keep the service interesting – you don't get bored.



Picture 7. Examples of different lenses. There are new lenses every day.

Snapchat's proto app, Picaboo, launched in 2011, was quite radically different from Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, which store and preserve users' digital content. In Snapchat, however, users' content deletes itself after a set time, ranging from a few seconds up to 24 hours (Todd, A. 2016.)

Jeffrey Rosen and Christine Rosen (2013) call this “temporary social media”. They write that the idea of temporary social media is important because it gives the ability to be candid, spontaneous and creative. Unlike Facebook or Twitter, Snapchat is brief, almost like in-person conversation: you can say what is in your mind without worrying it will be part of your digital dossier forever (Rosen, Rosen 2013).

This immediacy, the temporary content, is probably what intrigues in Snapchat. When I have talked to young people who use Snapchat, they say that they like it because it's authentic – people take pictures on the go and don't polish them – and because you don't have to worry about the content afterwards. All the talk about the dangers of social media, pictures and information you put there and can never completely delete. With Snapchat, you don't have to worry about that. Although, as Rosen and Rosen point out (2013), even though Snapchat promises to erase photos, the company's privacy policy says that it “cannot guarantee that the message data will be deleted in every case”. This is important to remember when using Snapchat, especially in a military setting.

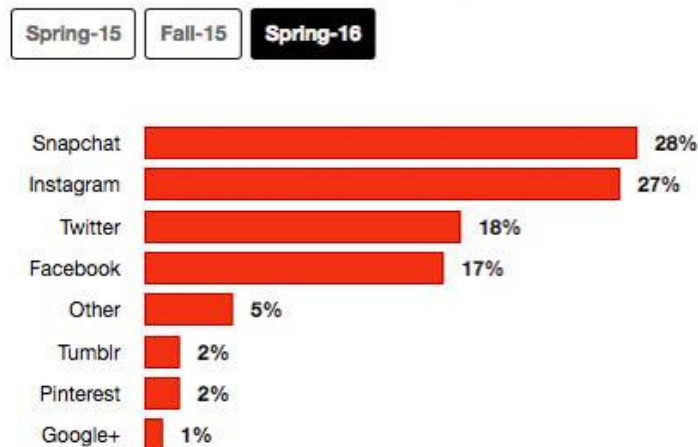
4.2 Popular among young people

Snapchat is very popular among teenagers and young adults (eMarketer, 2016); in fact, it is the mostly used social media channel among teenagers (Chew 2016). A research done in the United States in the beginning of 2016 shows that 60 per cent of Snapchat users were 13 to 24 year-olds (Statista 2016). Even though this research is done in United States, it shows the trend that most likely will take place also in Finland. It is also the fastest growing social media channel, growing 27 per cent in 2016 (eMarketer, 2016). Last year 4.5 per cent of Finnish people were using Snapchat, while in Sweden the number was already 15 per cent (TNS Gallup, 2015). A research done later in 2015 shows that already 8 per cent of Finns were using Snapchat (Pönkä, 2015).

Snapchat is growing perhaps faster than any other social media channel before. In Spring 2016, Snapchat beat Instagram to being the most used social media channel among teenagers (Fortune 2016). Picture 8 shows different social media channels ranked according which channels were most used among teenagers in the United States in Spring 2016. Snapchat is the most used channel, beating Instagram just by one percentage point.

Piper Jaffray Teen Survey - Social Networking

In the investment firm's semi-annual survey among teens, Snapchat had surpassed Instagram and Twitter as the social media platform of choice.



Source: [Piper Jaffray](#)

FORTUNE

Picture 8. Piper Jaffray's teen survey about social media channels (Fortune 2016).

I noticed the rise of Snapchat when our conscript soldiers serving in Ruotuväki started talking about it. They already used Snapchat for sharing their everyday life with their friends, and since they were in the military service, that was their everyday life. So this whole military life thing was already happening in Snapchat, only Finnish Defence Forces wasn't part of it. We were missing out on a great chance to reach one of our biggest target groups.

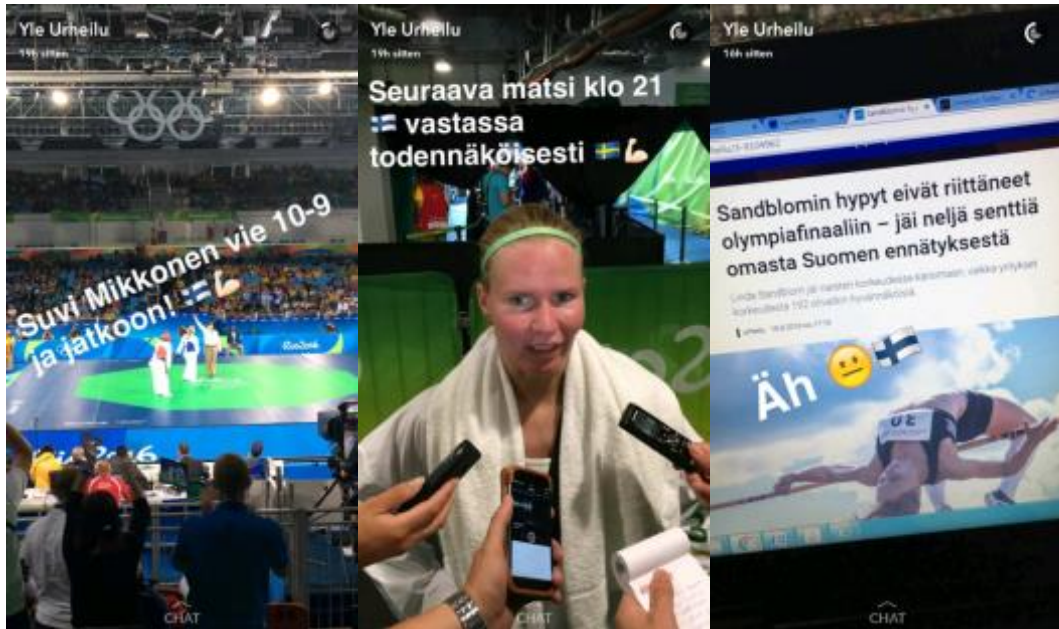
4.3 Organizations in Snapchat

I think Snapchat caught organizations and businesses off guard. It is so different from the already traditional social media channels which organizations know how to use, that organizations didn't know – still don't know – what to do with it. First it probably seemed that Snapchat couldn't be used for organizational communications. According to Kelly Bennett, interviewed by Steve Goldstein, only 2–3 per cent of businesses using social media are using Snapchat (Goldstein, S. 2016).

Of course you shouldn't start using a new channel just because it's trendy; you should have a plan, goals, target groups and tools to analyze the results. The channels should actually benefit the organization. But with 100 million active daily users, most of them teenagers and young adults (Goldstein, S. 2016), Snapchat is a channel worth considering – especially if you want to reach the youth and young adults.

4.3.1 Yle Sports

One popular organizational account in Snapchat is Yle Sports. It was snapping from the Olympic Games in Rio every day. It snapped behind the scenes but also sports events and results. Usually the results of the night were available in Yle Sports Snapchat in the morning.



Picture 9. Examples of Yle Sports snaps from Rio. Screenshots. Taken 19 August 2016.

Yle Sports had one person responsible for the channel during the Olympics. Snaps were combination of useful information and statistics and behind the scenes snaps with more relaxed atmosphere. Yle Sports also showed how the days are like for a sports journalist in the Olympics.

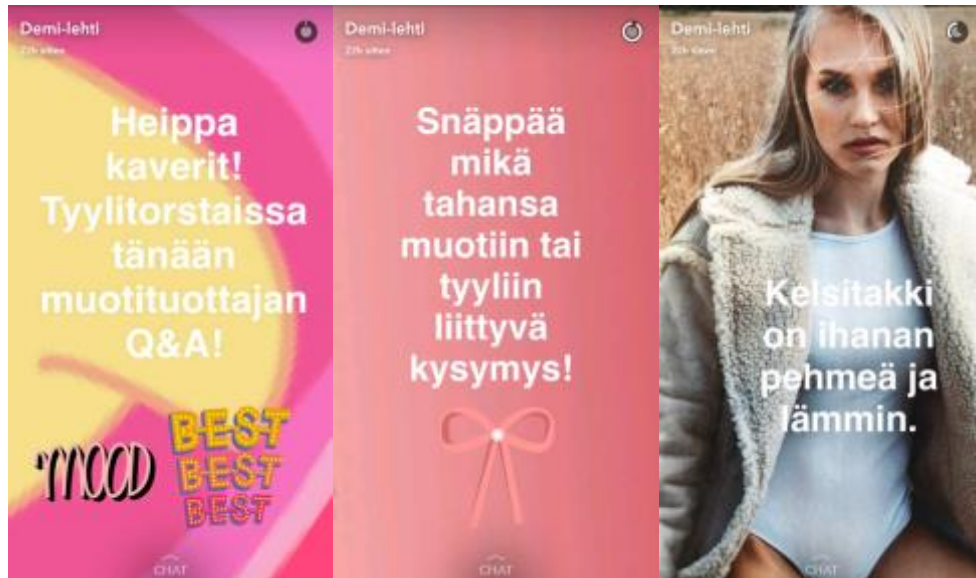
Yle Sports is a media and the content is not really about the organization, it's about sports and sports journalists who are snapping. The reason to follow Yle Sports during the Olympics could be to get information about the Games. Because of the time difference, Snapchat was a fast way to get the results first thing in the morning.

4.3.2 Demi magazine

Demi magazine, a lifestyle magazine for teenage girls, has started using Snapchat in an innovative and very interactive way. Demi has previously succeeded well in creating an online hub, a magazine's website where subscribers and readers actually hang out. The magazine acted fast when the media crisis first hit and realized they need to have a website where readers return again and again. Demi's website is about interaction as well

– they have chat room, vloggers, questions & answers and articles and videos (Demi.fi, 2016.)

Demi's Snapchat content is about lifestyle as well: about fashion, hobbies, vloggers, events like Tubecon etc. They interact with their followers for example by having competitions and answering questions. They also do interviews in Snapchat.



Picture 10. Examples of Demi fashion Q&A snaps. Screenshots. Taken 19 August 2016.

I think Demi's way of doing Snapchat is very insightful. Of course they have long history in making popular content for teenagers; now they just took over a new channel and modified the content for it. Perhaps it's the culture of having a dialogue with their readers: Demi has done that long before Facebook or Instagram.

Demi uses for example famous v-loggers as guests in their Snapchat. Their Snapchat is not about behind-the-scenes at the magazine, it's about creating the content that they have in the magazine and online and styling it suitable for Snapchat. I think Demi is a great example of succeeding in creating a community of your target group in Snapchat.

4.4 Building a community

Snapchat is fun and personal, because it's very interactive and fast. In her article "5 Ways to Build an Engaging Community on Snapchat", Ahna Hendrix (2016) says that Snapchat is different because it's raw, real and ultra personal. Snapchat allows any and every brand the opportunity to tell a backstory and it doesn't need fancy equipment or resources. "And the millennials are ALL over it", Hendrix writes.

Hendrix's (2016) five advice for building a community are: be yourself, post consistently, incorporate fun themes/activities, give shoutouts and promote others and ask for feedback. The first two advices are about you, but the rest are about the followers. Having activities, promoting others and asking for feedback is interactive and engaging, which is very important in Snapchat. In my experience, people follow someone in Snapchat because they feel like they are getting something out of it.

Hendrix (2016) points out an important notion: "Think about how you can add value to your audience by engaging them and not just preaching at them". In our pilot we have tried to think about this by asking feedback and asking what kind of content the followers would like to see, what interests them in the military service, and then actually producing the content they request.

Building a community is something we should try to achieve eventually with Snapchat. Following and engaging with Ruotuväki and Inttielämä accounts on Snapchat should feel like being part of a community; to share military stories, jokes and experiences together. This could be a long term goal for the channel.

5 Doing research: Piloting Snapchat

This chapter discusses the research method chosen for the study and sets the objectives for the research. The chapter covers benchmarking of other officials in Snapchat. I also explain the key terms used in this study: conscripts, draftees, reservists.

The whole study process, piloting of Snapchat, and the different steps taken during the pilot are explained in detail.

Conscripts start their service twice a year, in January and in July. First they complete the rookie period, about two months, which is the same for all conscripts everywhere. After the rookie period conscripts either continue to non-commissioned officer training or have expertise training as a private. At that point, for example, media conscripts are chosen. When we started the pilot, the media conscripts had been serving in their media posts about four months, so they already had experience about the Defence Forces media tasks. The pilot was finished just before they finished their service in September.

5.1 Action research

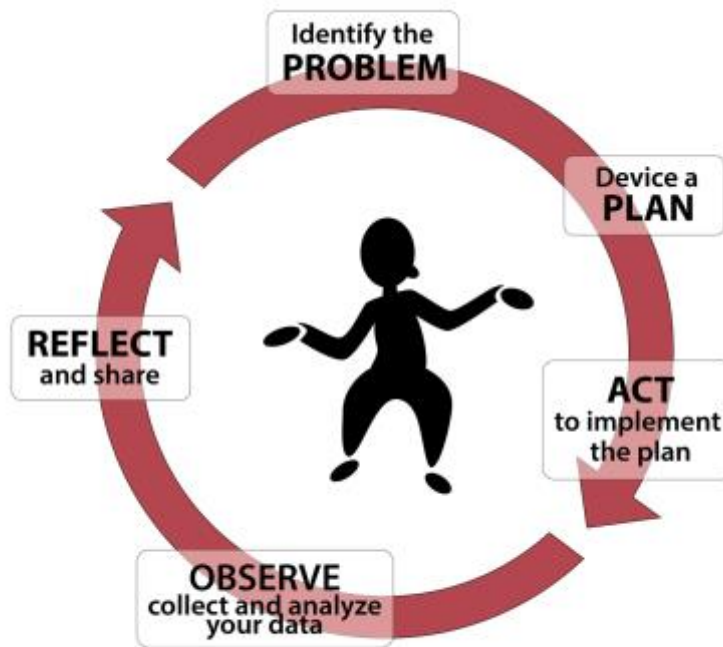
The method for this study is action research. Action research approach offers stimulating ideas on alternative methods, theories, and evaluative criteria which can then be discussed among researchers (Ozanne & Saatcioglu 2008, 424). It is a participatory process that aims at gaining practical knowledge for social action and change (Ozanne & Saatcioglu 2008, 424).

Action research involves consumers (or target groups in this case) throughout the research process from problem identification to design, data collection, analysis and results. Action research seeks change and developing solutions with the stakeholders. (Ozanne & Saatcioglu 2008, 424.)

Kurt Lewin is considered to be the father of action research. Lewin's original research model (in 1946) was cyclical; it started with a process of reconnaissance of identity key features that shaped the activities of the social group which was being studied. The data collected at that stage was used to identify problems and have hypothetical solutions. The hypotheses would then be tested in action strategy. (Somakh 2006, 11.)

Even though Somakh goes on arguing that during the past years, there has been criticism over the ability of humans to plan and implement change through rational process of

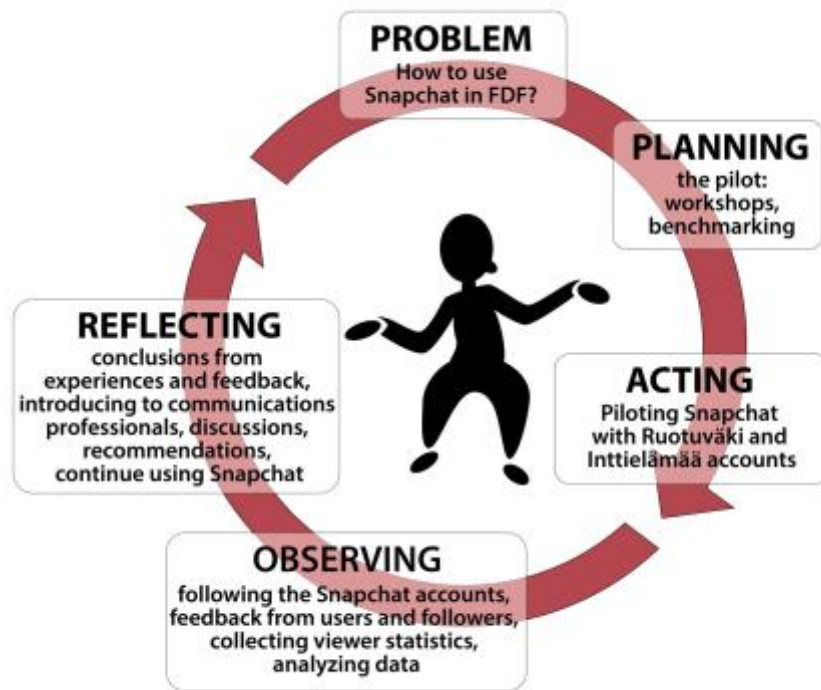
planning and action (2006, 11), the idea of action research being a cyclical process still widely stands. Action research is still being considered as a (never-ending) cycle of identifying a problem, forming a plan, taking action, observing and collecting data, and reflecting the results. Picture 11 illustrates this action research cycle.



Picture 11. The cycle of action research. Adapted from Mason University InfoGuides (2016).

Picture 12 elaborates how action research cycle was implemented in this pilot study. First the problem was identified: Finnish Defence Forces wanted to know how Snapchat could be used as part of communications. After recognition of the problem, the planning started with learning about the channel, having workshops with the target group participating and benchmarking other officials using Snapchat. Acting part took place when we started piloting Ruotuväki and Inttielämää Snapchats. Observation and analyzing of data happened through the whole pilot period. After the pilot I draw conclusions, introduced them to my colleagues at the Public Information Division, had open discussions and finally presented my suggestions to the Communications Manager.

This cycle is a perfect example of how piloting and using Snapchat, or any other social media channel, should be done in an organization. The using of the channel should be evaluated regularly. Social media changes, the audience changes: it's important to keep up with the change, to analyze actions and results and steer the course when needed.



Picture 12. Action research cycle in piloting Snachat for Finnish Defence Forces.

Ozanne & Saatcioglu write that “action researchers seek to observe, analyze and develop theories of social practices that can be applied beyond the immediate research context” The point of action research is to seek development theory through direct involvement in the study. (2008, 426.)

The original meaning and goal for action research was bringing about organizational change. According to Somakh, action research has established its importance as a methodology that supports systemic change (2006, 19).

Somakh defines eight important methodological principles for action research.

Action research:

1. Integrates research and action.
2. Is conducted by a collaborative partnership of participants and resources.
3. Involves the development of knowledge and understanding of unique kind.
4. Starts from a vision of social transformation and aspirations for greater social justice for all.
5. Involves high level of reflexivity.
6. Involves exploratory engagement with a wide range of existing knowledge.
7. Engenders powerful learning for participants.
8. Locates the inquiry in an understanding of broader historical, political and ideological context.

(Somekh 2006, 6–8.)

I this chapter I will take a closer look at principles 2., 3. and 7. and what they mean for this study.

Collaborative partnership of participants and researchers is very important in this study. As explained in communication chapter, conscripts are the main target group for social media communication at Finnish Defence Forces. In piloting Snapchat, they are the key participants from content creation to feedback and development. Without the conscripts this pilot could never have been done. According to Somakh, when participants' and researchers' roles and relationships are sufficiently fluid yet differentiated, it maximizes mutual support and allows individuals to make appropriate contributions given existing constraints (2006, 7).

Development of knowledge and understanding of a unique kind means carrying out a research in a natural social situation, like workplace, as an insider, who has the knowledge and understanding of that specific social environment (Somakh 2006, 7). Finnish Defence Forces is very much a unique organization, and understanding the culture, features and character of the organization is necessary in this study. Snapchat is a new channel for most of the Defence Forces employees, including communications staff. Learning how to use Snapchat in the Defence Forces and how to reach the young conscripts is important for my colleagues as well.

Powerful learning for participants seems quite obvious at first, since action research is participant research where the researcher's involvement is bound to produce learning and new ideas. According to Somakh, the development of self-understanding is very important in action research, because the impacts the analysis of data (2006, 8). "Primarily, this is a matter of ensuring the quality of research through understanding how personal values and assumptions shape research findings", Somakh writes (2006, 8). So learning, in this context, doesn't only mean learning new things during the research but learning to know who you are and how that affects the research.

5.2 Objectives for the research

Piloting Snapchat for Finnish Defence Forces started simply with interest in this new and popular social media channel. The fact that Snapchat is very popular among teenagers and young adults just made the channel even more appealing. When this pilot started, there was more or less a common understanding that Finnish Defence Forces need to reach young conscripts better before they enter the military service – and also after it. So

the objectives for the research formed to be duplex: objectives simply considering the channel and objectives considering the target group.

The aim for this study is to pilot Snapchat for Finnish Defence Forces. The research questions are:

- How can Snapchat be used as part of Finnish Defence Forces' communication and social media strategy?
- How Snapchat fits in with other social media channels (that Finnish Defence Forces is using)?
- How can Snapchat be used to reach young conscripts?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages for using Snapchat?

The goal for this study is to create an understanding of the character of Snapchat and to develop practical guidelines for using Snapchat as part of social media communication at Finnish Defence Forces. This study also serves as an example case of how to integrate new social media channels to organizational communication.

5.3 Key terms

The word conscript or conscripts is mentioned several times in this study. As a general term it refers to the people who are liable for military service; every male Finnish citizen from the beginning of the year in which he turns 18 until the end of the year he turns 60.

In this study conscripts are separated into three groups:

Draftees are the conscripts who are liable for attending a draft during the year they turn 18 but haven't yet started the military service.

Conscripts in service are the conscripts, who, at that moment, are serving in the military. Includes voluntary women in service.

Reservists are the conscripts who have completed their military service, but are liable for conscription until the year they turn 60. Includes women, who have completed voluntary military service.

5.4 Data collection

The data of this study was collected with qualitative methods. I used Finnish Tax Administration and the Police University College as benchmarks, because they were the only governmental officials using Snapchat at the time. I followed Finnish Tax Administration's and Police University College's Snapchat accounts for about three months. I interviewed communications professional responsible for Snapchat in both organizations. Interview with Nanna Jussila from Finnish Tax Administration was done face-to-face and I took notes during the interview. Anna Byckling, from the Police, I interviewed via e-mail.

I wanted to benchmark governmental officials using Snapchat because I wanted to know how other officials are using Snapchat, who are their target groups in Snapchat and how they see they have succeeded with it. I wanted to learn from their experiences. Following their accounts and seeing what kind of content they publish helped me in planning our own Snapchat. From the two officials, Police University College was closer to us, but still different from what we wanted to do in Snapchat.

During the pilot period I followed Ruotuväki and Inttielämää Snapchat accounts and watched every picture and video posted. The amount of publications varied depending on the day, but there were around 8–20 publications in Inttielämää Snapchat every weekday. Ruotuväki's account was not as active, around 3–10 publications a day and having some days without any content at all.

During the pilot I talked to Ruotuväki conscripts every day at work, and with Inttielämää conscripts I met two times – in the beginning and in the end of the pilot. During the meetings I collected feedback from the conscripts about using Snapchat – what kind of worries they had, what they thought was good and what difficult etc. I also wanted to know what kind of feedback and questions were asked through Snapchat, so basically what interests the followers.

The only numeral data that you can see in Snapchat is how many users have seen your snap. Since this data disappears with the snap, I asked the conscripts in the pilot to mark down the number of viewers every day. They marked them down on a shared google sheets document, so I could follow the numbers every day.

During the pilot I also talked to the superiors of the conscripts using Inttielämää Snapchat to hear their thoughts about the pilot. After the pilot I asked feedback from the superiors

via e-mail, because I wanted to know how the pilot had affected their work and how much working time they had had to put in.

With Inttielämää snappers we also had a WhatsApp group which we used to communicate about anything related to Snapchat. With Ruotuväki that was not necessary, because I saw Ruotuväki's conscripts at work every day. The WhatsApp group was very useful. I could give instant feedback about the content and ask questions. The conscripts could also ask questions and report any problems they might face. We sent messages via WhatsApp several times a week and it was very helpful.

5.5 Benchmarking – other officials in Snapchat

During the pilot period I could only find two officials using Snapchat: Tax Administration and the Police University College. I use them as comparison.

Benchmarking helped me with planning the pilot. Both benchmarked officials are still testing Snapchat and it might not have found its final form yet. There are no right or wrong answers in piloting Snapchat: you just have to try different things and see what works. Realizing this helped me to be more relaxed, realistic and open to mistakes as well.

5.5.1 Finnish Tax Administration

Finnish Tax Administration was the first Finnish official to launch Snapchat for official communications. They started using Snapchat in fall 2015. I met Nanna Jussila from Tax Administration's communications and she explained that in Snapchat they have three types of content: topics related to taxing, different events and behind the scenes (Jussila, N. 16 August 2016). I think the most value Snapchat gives Tax Administration is the customer service: people can ask tax related questions via Snapchat and they will answer.



Picture 13. Example of a behind the scenes snap. Screenshots. Taken in August 2016.

When starting to use Snapchat, the Tax Administration communications set five goals for the channel:

1. Tax positivity
2. Employer image among 25–30-year-olds
3. Current topics
4. To get feedback from the target group (15–25-year-olds)
5. To give faces to public officers.

(Jussila, N. 16 August 2016.)

First they had to recruit suitable employees for the channel. Jussila told that they wanted to find variety so that they would have young people from different departments. Snappers work in pairs for one week at a time. After few months they all get together and discuss the previous months and how to improve. (Jussila, N. 16 August 2016.)

So basically, when the Tax Administration started using Snapchat, they didn't know how it would turn out. They just wanted to try and were ready to steer the ship during the trip. In my opinion, this is how new things should be tested: first have some kind of a plan, but then just go for it. Many good communication ideas are ruined with too much planning and never really implementing. I think it's the fear of failure that keeps organizations or people from trying new things. But failure is not something to be feared – it's something to be looked forward at! Because failure is not an option, it's a certainty. But after the failure you can really do something successful. Also Jussila admitted, that at some point using Snapchat got kind of wild, and she had hold the reigns a bit tighter (Jussila, N. 16 August

2016). But with channels like Snapchat, where advance editing is not possible, overreactions are inevitable.

The Tax Administration manually saves all their snaps and records the number of snap viewers. This information is then put on intranet for all employees to see. (Jussila, N. 16 August 2016.)

Given the nature of Snapchat, it's fairly difficult to measure the results. Jussila said that it's difficult to know whether they have achieved their goals in Snapchat, but that they have gotten a lot of positive publicity for being the first governmental organization in Snapchat, so the reputation gain has been huge. (Jussila, N. 16 August 2016.)

5.5.2 The Police University College

The Police University College launched their Snapchat in January 2016 for a six-month pilot, which they then decided to continue. At the time of writing this, they had four students using the Snapchat, working in pairs every other week. They snap about their studies, and the purpose is to market the University College for young people and also to increase the visibility and interaction with the young. (Byckling. 9 August 2016.)

Anna Byckling, a communications officer at the University College, explained by email that they had had good experience with other social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, but they didn't want to lose a forerunner status by sticking only to old channels. Snapchat also fit well with the police's communications strategy parts "visibility and interaction" and "affecting the attitudes of children and the young". (Byckling. 9 August 2016.)

The Police University College was a perfect fit for a pilot, because it's easier to produce Snapchat-fitted content from the University College than of police officers at work. Byckling explains that it was clear from the beginning that the nature of Snapchat fit well with the students. For Snapchat an instant communication between young people was most suitable, and that's why students were chosen to produce the content. (Byckling. 9 August 2016.)

The Police University College snaps about everyday life of the students and the campus life etc. They also have theme days when someone else, for example a teacher answers questions. Every Friday Snapchat is used by the communications professionals. The

Snapchat content producers have their own WhatsApp group, where they can discuss Snapchat issues and themes. (Byckling. 9 August 2016.)



Picture 14. Examples of Police University College snaps. Screenshots. Taken in August 2016.

The students using Snapchat were educated about the communication strategy and policies in the Police as well as how to technically use the platform. They were also told which topics or information are confidential. Two police teachers are acting as Snapchat-students' tutors to use for fact-checking and other support. (Byckling. 9 August 2016.)

Byckling says that the feedback has been hugely positive, but the channel is still fairly new to the staff, so internal communication is very important when introducing new channels and new ways of communicating.

5.6 The pilot process

The pilot first saw the light of day in April 2016, when the Communications Manager of Finnish Defence Forces gave Ruotuväki a task to plan and carry out piloting Snapchat.

The guidelines given for the pilot were that Ruotuväki should make a plan about how to use Snapchat in the Defence Forces, and conscripts serving in Ruotuväki would have to be included in the planning process.

The research started by getting to know Snapchat as a channel. I downloaded the software and started using it. In the beginning I read articles about Snapchat and started benchmarking organizations that use Snapchat and were comparable to Finnish Defence

Forces. All the theory and examples were a good basis, but we needed practical information and first-hand experiences about using Snapchat.

I wanted to learn what kind of channel Snapchat really was, and why were young people so into it. Going back on Richard Blundel's theory about needing an open mind, willingness to take on new and unfamiliar ideas and being open to the audience's needs (Blundel 2004, 1) helped me work through my thoughts.

Finnish Defence Forces had already tried to reach young people in other social media channels, like Instagram. Even though there is good content in Instagram, it does not reach conscripts, especially draftees, well enough.

Early in the process I decided that piloting Snapchat in practice would be the best way to study it and eventually come up with a plan about how to use it in the Defence Forces in the long run. I knew I needed the help of the main users of Snapchat: young people, especially conscripts.

5.7 Workshop

I decided to organize a workshop to plan the pilot and to talk about Snapchat. I invited my colleagues, the conscripts serving in the Public Information Division, and Innokampus to attend the workshop. Innokampus is a think tank that consists merely of young people, mostly students from senior secondary school. Innokampus had already previously worked with Ruotuväki and I knew they had good ideas about social media and especially Snapchat; they had already suggested that Ruotuväki should start using Snapchat.

I chose workshop as the working method because I have had good experience with workshops before. When people from different backgrounds get together, share ideas and build on them and sketch something together, the results can be so much better than just me trying to figure it out myself. Having Innokampus and the conscripts present was important, because I wanted to hear how the users of Snapchat, and our major target group, saw and felt Snapchat.

The workshop was May 3rd 2016.

We started the day by brainstorming ideas. Both Innokampus members and the conscripts agreed that the content in Snapchat should be as easy as possible, it should be ordinary from everyday life in the service. Some of the Innokampus members actually thought that

the content that Finnish Defence Forces has in other social medias, even in Instagram, seems too cool, too polished. They didn't feel they could relate to that. One very important thing in Snapchat seemed to be the ability to relate to the content or the person. Innokampus participants explained that they wanted to see ordinary things from the life of the conscripts in the service.

This was a surprise to me. The content in Instagram, which was meant to interest young people, didn't actually interest them because it seemed too polished. Too cool to be authentic. But the truth is, the pictures in Inttielämää Instagram are actually from everyday life in the military; they are not faked or made to look exceptionally good. Most of the pictures in Instagram are taken by conscripts in service, but the decision about publishing pictures is often made by how good a picture is. And some of the pictures are taken with SLR camera by professionals. Even though I might think they still look authentic, someone else might not; maybe the idea of what is authentic is different for different age and target groups. Understanding the target group was really key to succeeding in the pilot.

Hearing the opinions and visions in the workshop made me realize some things that we were doing wrong in reaching the young people. In the social media strategy conscripts were the number one target group; but had we thought about how to actually reach them in social media? Just being in social media doesn't mean your target group finds you, or even cares you are there. This was the key question: what if one of our biggest target groups is not interested in our message? My conclusion was that there is something wrong with our message or the way we communicate it. How to fix it? Learn the needs of your audience and the context of the communication, like Blundel (2004) argued.

I started thinking that maybe the roots of our problem with social media and the young people was that the Defence Forces published pictures that communications professionals thought represented the reality of military life – but the young people had a different idea. So instead of forcing the organization's idea, why not change the way the message is being carried out? If the young people wanted to see the everyday life of conscripts, was the communications professional or the conscript himself better in telling that story?

After we had talked about the nature of Snapchat we went on discussing what would be the best way to implement the pilot. One thing I needed to figure out was which user account we would use. Finnish Defence Forces? Ruotuväki? Or maybe Inttielämää, which already had a known brand in Instagram, even if it didn't reach so many young people as we would have wanted.

The user name is pretty much the only thing followers can see in Snapchat, so it was important to get it right. Which one would interest young people the most? Using Ruotuväki would be the easiest, since I knew all our conscripts and worked with them every day; the pilot could be managed within our department. Using Inttielämää would require conscripts from different units to participate, but it would also be more realistic content from the service.

After a morning of brainstorming I divided the group into two smaller groups for the afternoon. Based on the conversation in the morning we decided that the other group would be Ruotuväki Snapchat and the other would be Inttielämää Snapchat. Each group had a task to plan the Snapchat account and answer questions like what kind of content would be interesting in that account and who would update it etc.

Both groups came back with really good presentations. Here are their ideas of the channels:

Ruotuväki Snapchat

- Reporting from the field, from gigs
- Viewers can ask questions from interviewees
- Videos and pictures from everyday life at the garrison
- Military telegrams: short news videos
- More relaxed content, stories from free time and hobbies
- A bit edited content, but not too much. Need to be authentic and real.
- Gives faces to people behind Ruotuväki.

Inttielämää Snapchat

- Pictures and videos of everyday life in the military: going to the breakfast, leaving for weekend holiday, at the canteen, free time etc.
- Feelings and atmosphere with a sense of humor
- Tips for the service
- Has to be authentic and real: has to be updated by conscripts.
- Showing different branches of military and training
- Variety of stories from the garrisons and also from the war practices etc.

After talking about the presentations and the two accounts, it became quite clear that the character of these two Snapchat accounts would be different from each other. Inttielämää

Snapchat would be the most authentic and best for telling the stories of everyday life of conscripts, since Ruotuväki conscripts have a special service which cannot be compared to the service most conscripts will have.

The workshop day gave me a lot of information and material to go about with the plan.

5.8 The challenges to tackle

Compared to the other social media channels, Snapchat turned out to be quite different and quite a pickle. First of all, only one person can be logged in Snapchat at a time, when in all the other social media channels you can have multiple users logged in at the same time. This problem, however, was easy to solve: we would have snapping turns.

The second, and probably the biggest, problem was the lack of data for analysis: the only data you can get out of Snapchat is how many people have seen your snap, and this information disappears after 24 hours as well as the snaps. You don't even know how many people follow you. You don't know anything about the people who follow you. This was tricky, since all online and social media communication is carefully analysed in the Defence Forces. How could I analyse the results of the pilot, if I couldn't even know how many people were following us? How could I know if we've reached our target group, if I didn't know anything about the followers?

The only outside tool I could find for Snapchat analysis was Snaplytics, but that service costed 179 dollars a month the cheapest (Snaplytics, 2016). I wasn't given any extra budget for the pilot, so that was out of the question. So the only way of collecting data would be every day to manually write down how many people had seen each snap.

5.9 The pilot plan

After analyzing the Snapchat workshop day, I came up with a proposal about how to proceed with the pilot. I presented the proposal to the Communications Manager May 11th. Here is what information it contained.

5.9.1 Target groups and goals

The target group was easy to set, since Snapchat is mostly used by young people, and that is the group Defence Forces needs to reach better. So the target group for Snapchat is the young: people already in the service and draftees who haven't yet done the military service. Even though young men were the core target group because of liability for

conscription, reaching young women was also important. Some of them might be interested in completing voluntary military service, and many of them were girlfriends to conscripts in service.

I wanted keep the goals for Snapchat clear and as simple as possible. So I set two goals:

1. To reach young conscripts.
2. To tell real and ordinary stories from the military service and of conscripts' everyday life in order to reduce prejudice and false images and support realistic images or even create positive images.

5.9.2 Risks

I recognized two risks in the pilot: Snapchat requires location settings to be on in order to use some of the features. Since location settings cannot be on when in military areas, this was a problem – but a minor one. Simple solution was to keep the location settings off and just not use those features at all.

Second risk was far trickier: the risk of overreaction. Never before had the Defence Forces given its official communications channel completely to the conscripts. Snapchat (in my plan), for the first time, was going to be a channel completely used by conscripts. And because the nature of Snapchat doesn't allow advance editing, we just had to trust that the conscripts would follow the guidelines given to them. I was sure that overreaction would not only be a possibility but it would most certainly happen at some point. So we had to accept that beforehand. We would have to accept that in order to make Snapchat genuine and to work in the way we wanted it to work, we would have to be prepared for mistakes and potentially reputation risky content. I would of course be following the content every day and would intervene when necessary.

5.9.3 Ruotuväki and Inttielämää Snapchat

I suggested that we would use two user accounts for the pilot. First we would start with Ruotuväki account, which would launch in the beginning of June. Ruotuväki's content would be snaps of the life of our conscripts and from garrisons and other places they go when writing and photographing articles for the newspaper and for online news. The purpose of Ruotuväki channel would be purely to test how it works: is it easy to manage snap turns, what kind of content collects most views and what needs to be taken into account with Snapchat. Testing the channel would then give basis for the next user

account, Inttielämää. I argued that starting with Ruotuväki account would really serve a purpose in the pilot, because we could get user experience from the channel already before launching the actual channel of Finnish Defence Forces.

Inttielämää would be the main Snapchat channel for the Defence Forces. It would be updated by conscripts who serve in different units in different military branches. Since the conscripts serving in Ruotuväki have quite a special service, their everyday life is not the same as for most conscripts. So to be able to tell the ordinary, everyday life story, it was important to have conscript snappers among the common conscripts in different units. That was the service that would be reality for the most men, and the service conscripts in service and reservists would be able to relate to.

I suggested that Inttielämää account would launch in the end of July or beginning of August, when we had had enough time to gather experience with Ruotuväki account. The whole pilot would end in September, which is when analysis of the results and decisions for the future would be done.

The Communications Manager accepted my proposal for the pilot. We agreed that there would be one pilot unit from each of the branches of military: The Army, the Navy and the Air Force. Each branch would be asked to name their pilot unit. I would be in charge of the pilot and training the conscripts involved. I would also analyze the pilot and present the results in September.

5.10 Ruotuväki Snapchat

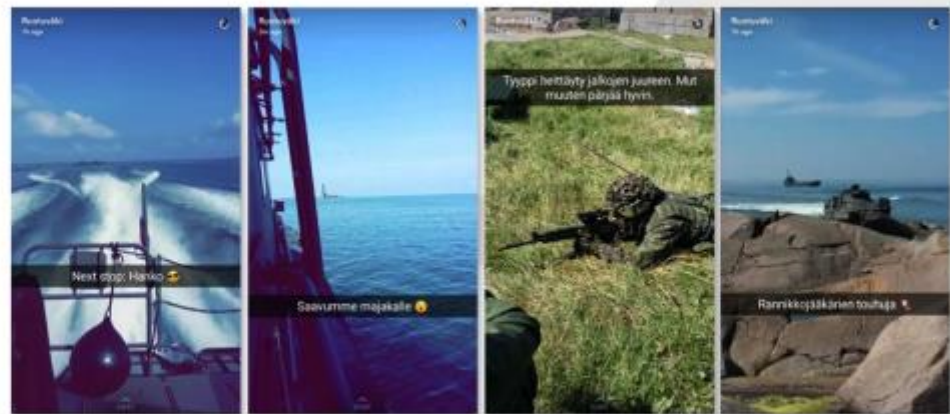
As agreed, the pilot started with Ruotuväki user account 13 June 2016. We advertised the channel in Ruotuväki's other social media channels. After posting a marketing picture in Instagram, the number of viewers grew about 200 in a day. Our conscripts produced all the content. They snapped about the everyday life in our office, but mostly from the field so when our conscripts went for interviews, events, war practices and other things which we write about.



Picture 15. An advertisement post we made in Instagram. By taking a screenshot and taking it to Snapchat, it will directly find our account and make it easy to follow it.

Every Tuesday we have meeting for online news where we discuss the which stories will be online and in social media channels that week. We have circulating web responsibility, which changes every Tuesday. The new online reporter will, under my guidance, be in charge of the website and social media. So it was easy to add just another social media channel to these meetings: every Tuesday we decided who would snap which day and about what. The online reporter was then responsible that what we agreed would be carried out.

Some of our conscripts were more eager to use our Snapchat than others. However, every reporter and photographer was required to learn it and use it on their turn. One of the first things I learned was that even more so than in other social media channels, in Snapchat every snap will represent the snapper personally. Snapchat as a channel is so personal that it was better to let people be honestly who they are instead of trying to force a certain Ruotuväki style on them. We naturally followed the guidelines for social media in the military, but other than that, I gave our conscripts the freedom to snap how they felt the best.



Puolustusvoimat

Helena Immonen
Ruotuväki
PEVIESTINTÄÖS

Picture 16. Examples of snapping from a news story gig.

Second thing I learned was the importance of supervision. Sometimes Snapchat was just forgotten and there was no content for a few days, even though we had planned it. So almost every day I reminded the conscripts of Snapchat and pushed them to snap. The most difficult days were the ones when no one was out on a gig. Snapping from our office seemed to repeat itself after few snaps. So even though Snapchat is a spontaneous channel, when used in an organization, it needs content planning just like all the other channels.

One thing we noticed within a few days of starting was the difficulty of getting new followers. When in Twitter, Facebook and Instagram you can buy advertisement to get the content to show for more people, or tag your posts with interesting hashtags to get them to show in certain groups and issue arenas, in Snapchat it doesn't work like that. The only way someone can start following you is that they know your exact user name, search for it in Snapchat and start following; you cannot bump into an account by coincidence. Following someone in Snapchat requires an active effort from the user. And getting more followers requires active and rightly targeted marketing from the admin. So we co-operated with Inttielämää Instagram, and made a marketing video which was published both in Ruotuväki Instagram and Inttielämää Instagram.



Picture 17. Screenshots of the marketing video in Inttielämää Instagram.

5.11 Preparing Inttielämää Snapchat

Right after Ruotuväki Snapchat had been activated, I started preparing for Inttielämää. Since everything in the Defence Forces happens through official documents, I made a document where I asked all the military branch commands to name a pilot unit from their branch. The requirements for the units were that they would have conscripts serving in media tasks and would already have a smartphone in their use.

The Army named Pori Brigade, the Navy named Coastal Brigade and the Air Force named Air Force Academy. These units were then accepted by the Public Information Division in the Defence Command.

After the units were decided I made another official document asking the units to command their Snapchat intended conscripts to the Defence Command 27 August for an official introduction to Inttielämää Snapchat. Superiors were welcome to join as well.

5.12 Introduction day at the Defence Command

So, 27 August 2016, seven conscripts reported to the Defence Command for the introduction day: two from Pori Brigade, three from Coastal Brigade and two from Air Force Academy. The schedule and program for the day was following:



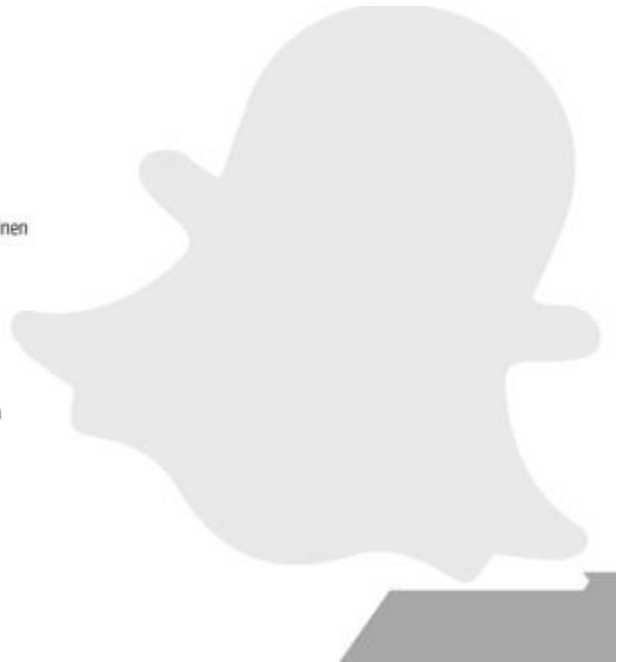
PÄIVÄN OHJELMA

- Klo 10–11:15 Ilmoittautuminen, esittäytymiset, yleinen keskustelu
- Klo 11:15–12:00 Lounas
- Klo 12:00–13:00 Ruotuväen Snapchatin esittely, Inttielämää-tilin läpikäynti, käyttöperusteet
- Klo 13–14 Ryhmätyöt
- Klo 14–15 Ryhmätöiden läpikäynti, snäppivuorojen jako, karkea sisältösuunnitelma
- Klo 15 Mahdollisuus kysymyksille ja keskustelulle



Puolustusvoimat

Helena Immonen
Ruotuväki
PEVIESTINTÄÖS



Picture 18. A slide from my presentation at the introduction day. Program and schedule.

I wanted to learn who the conscripts were and what their experience with Snapchat was. To my surprise, three out of seven had never used Snapchat before. Just in case I had asked one of Ruotuväki conscripts to prepare a short introduction about how to use Snapchat, so that turned out to be very useful.

The background of the conscripts and their tasks in their units varied. For example, the conscripts of Coastal Brigade were familiar with Inttielämää Instagram and had taken pictures for it, whereas conscripts from Pori Brigade had never used it.

After introducing ourselves I explained why the Defence Forces wants to be in Snapchat and what are the goals for the channel and the pilot. The goal for the pilot, naturally, was to find out how Snapchat can be used in the Defence Forces. The goals for Snapchat, as stated before, was to reach young people and tell the authentic stories from the military and of the conscripts in order to create positive images of the service.

I had asked two of Ruotuväki conscripts to tell about Ruotuväki Snapchat. We had a short introduction to what we had done in Snapchat and what kind of experiences we had gained from the channel.

After that I explained how we had planned Inttielämää Snapchat to be: to tell everyday life stories of conscripts serving in the pilot units. Each unit would snap in their turn. I asked the conscripts how long the turns should be in each unit and we agreed that each unit would snap for a week. The pilot period of Inttielämää would be six weeks, so each unit

would get to have a snap turn twice. The unit could decide internally who of the conscripts would snap which day, as long as there was new content every day.

I had printed out the social media guidelines for conscripts and reservists and even though all the conscripts were somewhat familiar with the guidelines, we went through them together. The instructions were that location settings would be off all the time, and when taking pictures or videos where you can see people's faces, permission needs to be asked. Taking pictures in war practices or of different systems would need permission from an instructor in charge. But since the point of Snapchat was to tell stories of the conscripts, taking pictures of systems or devices/equipment was not even necessary.

In the afternoon I divided the group into two and gave them one hour to plan their own snap turns and what content they would publish. I advised them to think about what was special in their unit and in their military branch from the point of view of a conscript. After the hour both groups presented their plans. They had planned the content based on the everyday life of conscripts in their units, which was of course the point, and as such the plans were suitable to carry out.

After the presentations we had an open discussion about the implementation of the pilot plan. The conscripts had some questions about the content, for example would it be okay to take a picture or video of a conscript who comes back from a free evening in the city and is drunk. Since appearing drunk in your uniform is not allowed, I said we wouldn't be taking that kind of pictures. Besides, that picture would need permission from the person in it, and if he/she was drunk, would he/she be able to make that decision? We also talked about smoking. The Defence Forces has tried to become a smoke-free environment, but of course many conscripts and employees still smoke. Would it be okay to have content in Snapchat where people are smoking? If not, would it be censorship? This topic was interesting and we discussed about it for a while. We came to conclusion that if we are snapping about the everyday life of conscripts, some of them can be seen smoking for example during breaks, and that's okay, because it is the reality of it. But smoking should not be portrayed as a cool thing or in a way that would encourage people to smoke. Also no cigarette trademarks could be visible in the snaps.

Another thing the conscripts were wondering was, what they should do if an officer or instructor would forbid them to photograph, even though nothing secretive or operational was going on. We talked about this scenario for a while and I said that first you could try to explain what you were doing and what the Snapchat pilot was about, but if the officer would still insist that you don't take pictures, then you don't take pictures. There will

always be someone, who doesn't approve open communications or thinks using social media in the Defence Forces is unnecessary. If ignoring that person's point of view at that moment, it would probably only increase negative attitude.

One thing was clear after the discussion: the conscripts would face situations that they couldn't anticipate and they would have to make their own decision whether to snap or not to snap. We couldn't possibly go through all the scenarios they might face and talk about whether it's okay to use Snapchat in that situation.

In order to easily have contact with the group I created a WhatsApp group, since all of us were using WhatsApp. That group would be their way to contact me or each other and my way to know what was going on and give instructions along the way. WhatsApp turned out to be an excellent tool for this.

We finished the introduction day by dividing the Snapchat turns and going through, one more time, the essential instructions and requirements. We decided that the Coastal Brigade would start the pilot, since their conscripts were most experienced with Snapchat. They would be followed by Pori Brigade and Air Force Academy. So the planned turns for the pilot were as follows:

Week 31: Coastal Brigade
Week 32: Pori Brigade
Week 33: Air Force Academy
Week 34: Coastal Brigade
Week 35: Pori Brigade
Week 36: Air Force Academy

One of the most important requirements was the same as for Ruotuväki Snapchat: to manually write down how many people had seen each snap. That was our only data we could get for the analysis. Ruotuväki conscripts had opened an excel sheet for the data on Google drive which they could update from everywhere. The same method was chosen to be used by Inttielämää snappers.

My wrap-up of the instructions was as follows:

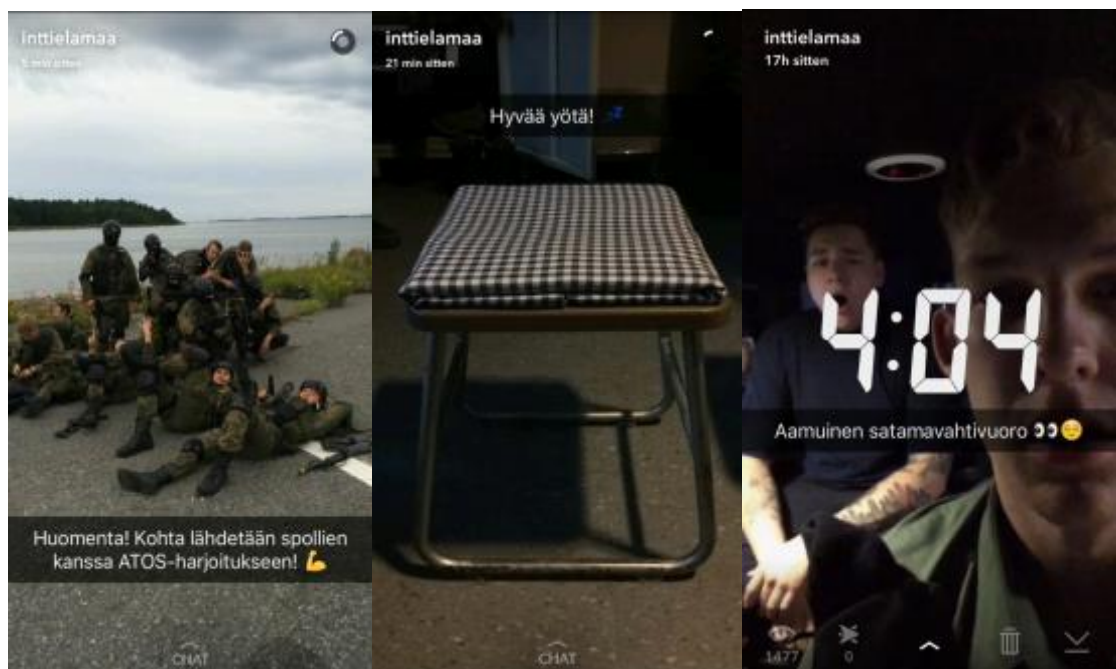
- The unit who has the Snapchat turn is responsible that there will be content every day
- Concentrate on the everyday life of conscripts
- Learn the social media guidelines by heart

- Snap viewer data needs to be written down every day
- You have a chance to influence how the Defence Forces' Snapchat account will be like: so give feedback!

5.13 Inttielämää snapping

Inttielämää Snapchat activated in the evening on Sunday 31 July 2016, when the conscripts of Coastal Brigade returned to their garrison from a weekend holiday. The next morning, they continued snapping about the regular, everyday topics. Since we had talked about bringing out their respective military branches, the conscripts arranged a night in a ship where they participated and snapped for example from a night watch.

I watched every snap every day and sometimes commented in our WhatsApp group. Since the conscripts from Coastal Brigade were already using Snapchat themselves, their snapping was natural from the beginning. They used filters and took funny videos, but also showed the life in Coastal Brigade.



Picture 19. Examples of Coastal Brigade's snaps.

After the first week Pori Brigade took the turn. Pori Brigade is divided into two units: the other one is in Säkylä and the other in Niinisalo. Pori Brigade had one conscript for Snapchat in both units.



Picture 20. Examples of Pori Brigade snaps.

Pori Brigade was the only unit where we had a female snapper. She got a lot of questions in Snapchat about women's voluntary military service.

Pori Brigade week was mostly about ordinary, everyday things in the garrisons. They also started using the new Snapchat feature, publishing photos from the phone gallery. That way other conscripts could send pictures and they could be published in Snapchat. Above is a picture of such snap. When publishing from the phone gallery, the snap looks different and it says the picture is from gallery, not taken at that very moment.

After Pori Brigade Snapchat was handed over to Air Force Academy. Luckily they were going to participate in a war practice in Lohtaja, so they were able to have some action in their turn in Snapchat.



Picture 21. Examples of Air Force Academy snaps.

The snapping continued in relatively same pace and path during the whole pilot period.

5.14 Overreaction

Already in the beginning of the pilot I anticipated that some kind of overreaction would happen – not because I thought the conscripts would want to do it on purpose, but because things like this happen when you are trying new things.

During the war practice on the third week of the pilot, the Air Force Academy snappers published a video where the other conscript is playing with a rifle. It looks like the person filming the video is a target. The person with a rifle is moving like in a game, dodging and aiming, almost like playing catch with the other one. But there is a moment when the conscript raises its rifle and aims directly at the person with the camera, so also aiming at the viewer. It looks like they are having fun pretending to shoot someone.

This video was clearly not suitable content for Finnish Defence Forces Snapchat. Even though the conscripts learn how to use a rifle and basically to kill people in a war, it's totally different than having fun and playing around with the idea of killing someone. The shooting training in the Defence Forces is taken very seriously: it's not supposed to be fun and games.

It didn't take too long before a conscious follower had taken a screenshot of the video and tweeted it.



Picture 21. Screenshot of a tweet by Andreas Turunen.

The video, this tweet or the pictures, however, didn't stir up any kind of social media scandal. I think partly it was because this tweet was directly tweeted to Finnish Defence Forces account, so in order to see it on one's news feed, a Twitter user would have had to follow both Finnish Defence Forces and the tweeter, Andreas Turunen. Also the video was no longer available in Snapchat. Quite many people saw it on Snapchat, though. Some of them sent criticism through Snapchat straight to the snappers.

After watching the video myself and seeing this tweet I talked with the conscripts responsible. They had sincerely thought the video would just be funny and playful. They didn't realize, while doing it, that it would not be appropriate. We agreed that whenever filming guns, the content would have to be discreet and follow the training guidelines of Finnish Defence Forces. For example, in the same practice there were live round shootings to practice defence. It was okay to film the practice even though there were

guns and live shooting – but everything was done according to the safety guidelines and for the purpose of the training. Fooling around with a rifle is neither.

In addition to this, there was only one other time when I had to remark a snap. There was one picture, where a conscript held a pack of cigarettes. There was a bee on the pack, and the picture was supposed to be about the bee, but you couldn't really see the bee in the picture so well, so the picture seemed to be only about the cigarettes. Also the trademark was well visible, and since we had agreed in the introduction day that no cigarette trademarks should be visible, I gave notice about that.

5.15 Wrap-up day

The pilot period ended September 9th. I organized a wrap-up day at the Defence Command September 8th to get feedback from the conscripts.

We started with a conversation where each snapping team would answer the following questions:

- What did you do with your snap turn?
- How did you organize the snapping during the days?
- Did you have any problems?
- What went well? What not so well?

Ruotuväki snappers said that at first they were kind of careful and shy about what to publish, but basically Snapchat was used whenever reporters and photographers would go on a story gig. At first the snaps would be taken in a car while going somewhere, but when they got more used to the channel, the content became more variable. But it seemed, that people were quite cautious with not being too personal in Snapchat, which is interesting since Snapchat is a very personal channel.

The turns were divided first at the weekly meeting on Tuesday, but maybe even more so just daily decided based on everyone's schedule. One practical problem that they encountered was that for some reason, photographing with a phone, especially in military areas, is considered to be more suspicious than photographing with a camera. So, sometimes the conscripts had to explain what they were doing and why.

Pori Brigade also divided the turns based on daily schedules. Since Pori Brigade consists of two units which are located quite far from each other, the conscripts would who would snap on which day and where. Some days were busier than others, and since the

conscripts have many other service duties as well, sometimes it was difficult to find time for Snapchat.

Snapchat was well received in Pori Brigade, and other conscripts were very interested in when is their snap turn. They also asked if they could send pictures they have taken of their days so the pictures could be published in Snapchat – and they did that. It was a nice way to get more conscripts involved in making Snapchat. Also the staff was positive about the new channel.

The Air Force Academy snappers felt that most difficult was finding the time for Snapchat. As multimedia conscripts, they have many other service duties. However during their first snap week they participated in a war practice, so they were able to get very authentic content for Snapchat. Another difficulty for them was that because neither of the snappers had used Snapchat before, it took time to learn the channel. For that reason they didn't, for example, answer the snaps that they got from the followers.

For the second snap week they were able to see Hawks at practice (practice jets) and snap about it. So considering the time difficulties and lack of experience with the channel, they were able to get good content.

The Coastal Brigade said that they used the Snapchat plan they created at the introduction day as basis for the snap turns, but also improvised and came up with new ideas. They also divided the turns among the snappers based on daily schedules. They felt that sometimes most problematic was to know if snapping about something was okay or not. They had some incidents where the staff at Coastal Brigade had a different idea about what was okay to photograph and what was not. There was a difference between how some of the staff felt that conscripts should be portrayed in social media and what the actual reality was. Since Snapchat was supposed to be authentic, not polished, these opposite views made it difficult for the conscripts to use Snapchat in some situations.

All the Inttielämää snappers thought that they did not have enough support by their superiors in everyday service.

After the questions and discussion, we had a workshop. In the workshop every snap team was, for example, asked to analyze the followers of Inttielämää and Ruotuväki Snapchats based on the messages they have gotten during their snap turns. Since Snapchat doesn't give you any information of the followers', or viewers', backgrounds, we had to try to analyze our followers by the messages we've received.

The snap teams had to answer three questions in their teamwork:

- Who has snapped back to the account?
- What kind of feedback you have gotten from the viewers?
- What are the most common content requests in Snapchat?

The teams presented their findings in the afternoon for the whole group and we talked about them. Based on the conscripts' findings we all agreed that the followers we have in Snapchat are mostly young people (both girls and boys) who have not yet done the military service, conscripts in service, and young reservists, who have recently finished their military service. So basically the target groups we were hoping to reach in Snapchat.

All the teams had gotten positive feedback from the followers. Young female followers who had not done military service asked about women's voluntary military service. We had one female snapper, so she got lots of questions about the service from girls and young women. Other topics that interested the followers were for example different branches of service (military police, artillery, transportation etc). Conscripts in the service or reservists were mostly commenting on the service and maybe having a laugh over a memory or a common joke in the service.

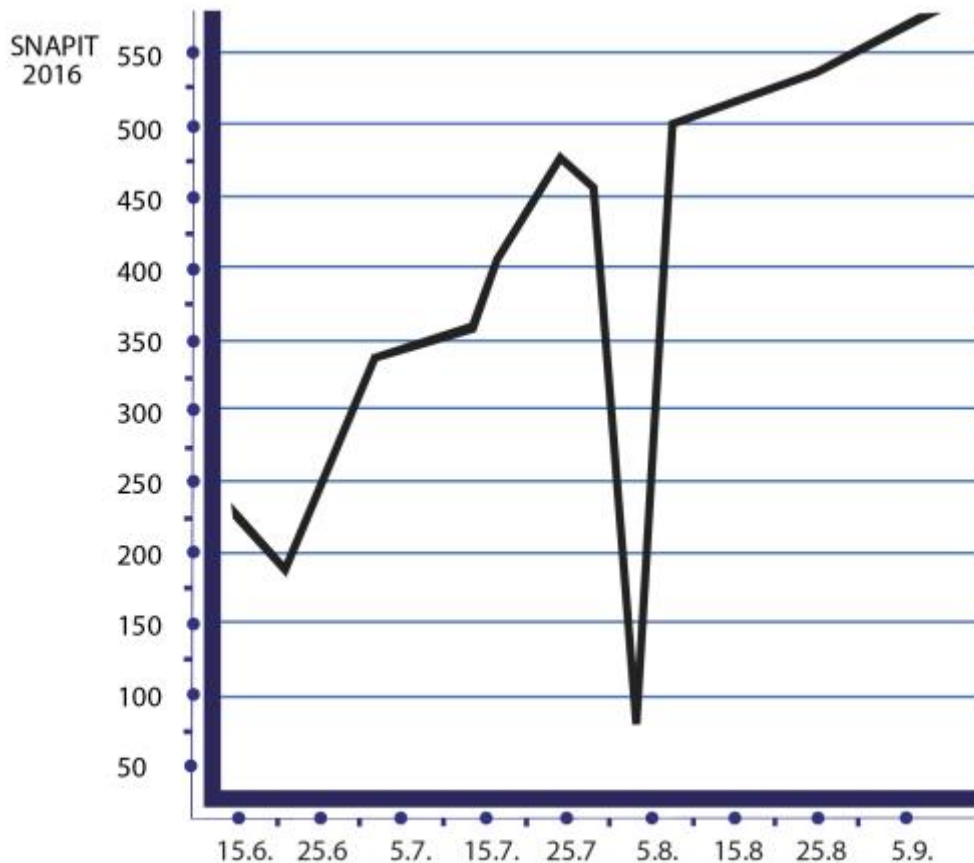
Ruotuväki, having fewer followers and slightly different content than Inttielämää, received requests to show more ordinary military life. Ruotuväki also received very casual snaps, people asking how's it going and so on.

Overall the reactions in Snapchat were very positive and encouraging. The number of snaps from followers varied between days, but during busiest days Inttielämää could receive around 50 snaps from followers.

5.16 Viewer statistics

The difficulty with getting Snapchat viewers is that you have to actively market your account – in Snapchat you cannot really accidentally bump into accounts that might interest you. So when we started with Ruotuväki Snapchat, we didn't really expect huge number of viewers. We got about 200 viewers during the first week, and the number has slowly increased during time.

Graphics 1. Ruotuväki Snapchat viewers during the pilot period.

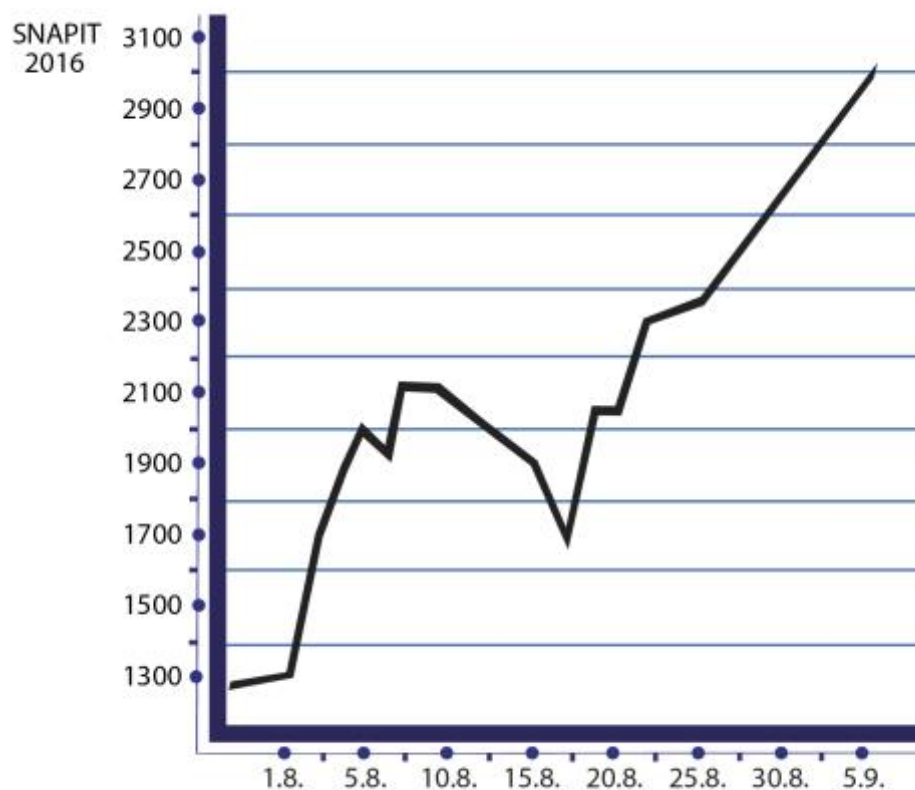


The increase seems to be pretty consistent, except in the beginning of August, when it seems to have dropped dramatically. However, this drop could also be a statistical error. In Snapchat you can only see the number of viewers for each snap. That information disappears along with the snap after 24 hours. So our snappers manually marked down the number of viewers every day. But it is difficult to get comparable statistics, because the number you get depends on the time you mark it down. For example, five hours after publishing a snap it could have 250 viewers and ten hours after 350 viewers. To get the final number you would have to check it right before the snap disappears so 24 hours after publishing it. It is very rare that you have a chance to check the viewer statistic of each snap right before the 24 hours is up. **So for that reason, the statistics are only directional and give the overall picture of the viewer trend.** In the case of Ruotuväki statistics, probably the reason for the drop is that our snappers marked down the viewer number quite early. August 5th was Friday, and our conscripts left for weekend holiday that day. I talked to our conscript who had the snapping turn that Friday, and he thought that because everyone was on weekend holiday, nobody checked the numbers after the first, early check, which was the only number marked down.

When examining Inttielämää statistics, you can see a mild drop after August 5th, and a bigger drop again after August 15th. That week was the first snapping week for the Air Force Academy, and there were a lot of content each day. It is possible that some of the viewers got tired after so many snaps and didn't watch them through the end, in which case the number of overall viewers would be lower than normally. Or it could be that the viewers didn't find that week's content so interesting. But once again we cannot rule out the possibility that the statistics were marked down quite early, so some of the later viewers were not included.

However, we can see the overall trend here as well, which is that despite the drop in the middle, the number of viewers is increasing steadily.

Graphics 2. Inttielämää Snapchat viewers during the pilot period.



6 Conclusion

In this chapter I go through and analyze the data and experiences that I gathered during the pilot period. I will talk about general observations, handle Ruotuväki and Inttielämää Snapchats separately and then discuss the research questions and findings. In the end of this chapter I will present my suggestions for using Snapchat in Finnish Defence Forces.

In the beginning of the pilot I set two goals for Snapchat:

1. To reach young conscripts.
2. To tell real and ordinary stories from the military service and of conscripts' everyday life in order to reduce prejudice and false images and support realistic images or even create positive images.

The pilot period, about three months, was relatively short time to test a new communication channel. But the goal was not to get answers to all possible questions, simply to find out whether Snapchat could be a purposeful channel for Finnish Defence Forces. For that, three months was enough.

I will also spend some time wondering how Finnish Defence Forces' Snapchat could be marketed to the target groups. Getting more followers in Snapchat requires active marketing, because Snapchat users can't discover interesting channels by accident: they need to know which channel they are looking for.

6.1 Communicating with Snapchat

The goal for the channel was to reach young people and tell them authentic stories about military life through pictures and videos. This goal was reached quite well: the viewers, at the moment, are young people, draftees, conscripts, reservists, and young women. During the pilot, the viewers were also active and engaged: we got more messages in Snapchat than in any other social media channel.

In the units Inttielämää Snapchat was piloted a bustle emerged: every time it was, for example, the Coastal Brigade's Snapchat week, everybody at the garrison knew it. The media conscripts got a lot of questions and comments and everybody was following tightly during their own week. So, already in six weeks Inttielämää Snapchat managed to create a sense of community in the units it was being piloted. Hendrix (2016) wrote in her article that one should think about how to add value to the audience by engaging them and not just preaching at them. Creating a community is one value Snapchat can have.

Based on the experiences of the pilot, my conclusion is that Snapchat is an excellent channel for reaching and engaging these specific target groups.

Piloting Snapchat was very interesting, because we tried something completely different from the traditional communication at Finnish Defence Forces. In corporate communication social media has been hailed as transformative, because it enables two-way, more symmetrical interaction between organizations and their publics (Macnamara & Zerfass 2012, 2).

But with Ruotuväki and Inttielämää Snapchats the organization is not really communicating with their target group (or public), but the target group itself is communicating with the target group. All the content was produced by conscripts in service, who actually are part of the target group we were trying to reach. Even though the conscripts got to plan the content quite independently, they were in fact telling the story that Finnish Defence Forces wanted to tell in the first place: the story of the military service. With Snapchat, we just removed the official organization from the communication and used the target group itself to communicate for us. This is not just 'two-way' communication between an organization and its public – it's a multi-way communication between target groups, where the organization is simply providing the basis for the communication and is behaving as a background enabler and influencer.

The goal to tell real and ordinary stories from military service from the viewpoint of the conscripts in service works well in Snapchat. However, it's important to consider the extent of the stories told by pictures and videos in Snapchat. With this kind of fast and temporary content, the story can't actually be complete or consistent; what the followers see are actually just bits and pieces of the life of a conscript in service, always colored and influenced by the circumstances in which the snapping happens and by the personality and style of the conscript snapping.

Many pictures also contained information that only a person who is serving or has served will understand. This can be a challenge when we want to reach the draftees who are not yet in the service. But at the same time we want to intrigue conscripts in service and reservists. The pictures and videos can have totally different meaning to people who haven't done the service and who have. Blundel (2004, 5) talked about the noise in communication, which can be anything that can interrupt or distort a message so that it fails to reach the receiver in its original form. Part of the humor in Snapchat about military

life is understanding the military humor and context the videos and pictures are being produced in.

Juholin (2009, 202) pointed out that it's important to know what kind of demands, needs and expectations different stakeholders have, and on the other hand, what goals the organization has towards the stakeholders. I think draftees, conscripts in service and reservists all have slightly different expectations for Finnish Defence Forces. Draftees don't yet know anything about the service, conscripts in service are in the middle of it and reservists have already completed the service. Understanding whether the same content is as appealing to draftees as it is to conscripts in service or reservists would require more research.

6.2 Ruotuväki findings

Ruotuväki Snapchat was the actual pioneer in the pilot; it was the first official Snapchat account in Finnish Defence Forces to start producing content. When we started with Ruotuväki, we were really just trying out things and trying to build basis for Inttielämää account to work out.

When Ruotuväki was the only channel, there was nothing to compare the content with. We would plan the following week in our online meetings on Tuesdays, and then our conscripts would just snap from gigs and from the office. There was not very deep content planning happening, and most of the conscripts were quite busy with everyday duties already before Snapchat. But one thing we discovered quite fast was that you have to market Snapchat pretty actively in order to get new followers – you can't really bump into interesting accounts by accident like in Twitter or even Instagram.

In the first workshop, where Ruotuväki and Inttielämää Snapchat accounts were planned, it was clear that these two accounts should have different profiles, different brands. During the pilot this viewpoint was confirmed. There were times when our conscripts had difficulties producing interesting content, because there were days when most of them were working from our office. When Inttielämää Snapchat was launched, it was publishing interesting content from the service, and Ruotuväki account seemed to be overshadowed by Inttielämää. We realized that Ruotuväki really needed a totally different approach, to be its own brand, like it was planned in the beginning. Even though Ruotuväki Snapchat had a good plan, what it meant in practice wasn't clear in the beginning. The brand, and the need of own style, solidified during the pilot. The benchmarks, the Finnish Tax Administration and the Police University College, were actually not good benchmarks for

Ruotuväki. We needed benchmarks like Demi magazine, media content for teenagers and young adults.

We sat down with Ruotuväki conscripts and started brainstorming about the account. We talked about how we were a media and should use Snapchat as a media, but with a twist of military in it. Our conscripts started planning different ways of doing it in practice. They came up with “aamuinen katsaus” (Morningful report), which we would do couple of times a week in our Snapchat. In Morningful report our conscripts would report about something concerning either the life of conscripts or some story we were covering with a twist of military and news report humor. Picture 22 is a screenshot of the Morningful report video, in which the “studio” settings for the report can be seen. The newest Ruotuväki should always be in the background.



Picture 22. Screenshot of Ruotuväki's Morningful report in Snapchat. Taken 31 October 2016.

Out of Ruotuväki and Inttielämää accounts, Inttielämää was more popular. That was expected and also intended, since Inttielämää was planned to be the core channel for reaching young conscripts.

Despite the difference, there is a market for Ruotuväki Snapchat as well. Inttielämää is about the everyday life of conscripts in the garrisons, but Ruotuväki can be humorous, edited channel which tells military stories like a newspaper in Snapchat.

6.3 Inttielämää findings

Inttielämää Snapchat became popular quite fast. Getting 3000 active viewers in six weeks is a very good result. The followers also sent snaps back to Inttielämää on a daily basis making it the most interactive social media channel used in the Defence Forces.

The content was planned and carried out by the conscripts through the whole pilot. My guidance over the channel was minimal: we talked in our WhatsApp group every week, but mostly I was giving positive feedback or asking what plans they had for their snap turn and so on. There were only few times I needed to give stronger guidance in terms of what kind of content not to publish.

The conscripts worked pretty independently, although having the WhatsApp group for communication was very important during the pilot. In terms of time, I did not use too much of my working time to Snapchat. But when planning the future of the channel, instructing it and the conscripts need to be taken into account in planning working time. But when all the content is produced by the conscripts, it is easier for the communications staff.

I consider Inttielämää Snapchat quite a success. The feedback from the conscripts using it and from the followers were very positive. In my opinion, the channel has already succeeded in telling ordinary stories from everyday life of conscripts. The story narration in Snapchat is quite unique: the character of the channel makes it approachable, light, funny and relatable.

The goals for Snapchat were to reach young people and to tell ordinary stories of military life in order to support realistic view and create positive images. Most of the followers in Snapchat, based on the comments and snaps we've gotten, are young people, so the target audience is reached. The content succeeded in telling ordinary stories of military life as well. Whether this content and the stories in Snapchat managed to support realistic view or even create positive images is much more difficult to analyze, and in this timeframe, practically impossible. How the stories in Snapchat affect the images young people have of military service could maybe be researched in a few years. For example, when starting the military service, some conscripts could fill a survey about the effects of Snapchat.

The interest and enthusiasm that Inttielämää Snapchat caused in young women was a surprise for me. Young women were of course included as a target group as well as

young men, but the popularity was still unpredictable. Many young women snapped back to Inttielämää account asking about voluntary military service and how it was to be a woman in the service. Luckily we had one female snapper in our pilot team, so she could answer these questions a bit better than her male peers. The female aspect of Inttielämää Snapchat should be considered carefully; should there be additional goals regarding the female audience?

6.4 The role of superiors

During this pilot the instructing and guiding the usage of Snapchat was intentionally concentrated in the Public Information Division of Finnish Defence Command, so basically to me. But, each of the conscripts participating in the pilot, have a superior in their units, who is responsible for the everyday guidance. The conscripts, as mentioned before, have many other service duties in addition to Snapchat. These tasks mainly come from their local superiors at the units.

The local superiors have a better knowledge over what is happening in their respective units, which could benefit the content planning for Snapchat. Also the local superiors see the conscripts more often, whereas I only saw them twice and most of the guidance was done through WhatsApp.

Snapchat could possibly benefit from giving the local superiors a stronger role. During the pilot I was talking with the superiors so that they knew about Snapchat and what we are trying to do with the pilot, but how actively they wanted to participate was up to them. However, during the pilot, none of the local superiors were using Snapchat themselves. So they did not know what kind of content their conscripts were producing. When considering the future, this is something that needs to be thought through.

One reason for this is that, unfortunately, the communications professionals working for Finnish Defence Forces don't have work phones that have social media applications in them. This is due to the strict information security rules in the Defence Forces. The work phones are so protected that downloading software is simply not possible. This is understandable, but makes social media usage very difficult for communications employees. They can only publish by computer or tablet; but for example Snapchat is only available for mobile phones.

One solution to this problem is to acquire separate phones, which would be only for social media use. Any other work-related information could not be handled with them. This way,

information security would not become endangered, but the communications professionals could do their jobs better.

If we cannot fix this phone problem, the role of local superiors in Snapchat would be very minimal. Instructing Snapchat content just isn't possible if you don't use the channel or see the content that is published.

6.5 Finding answers to research questions

In the beginning of the study I set four research questions:

1. How Snapchat can be used as part of Finnish Defence Forces' communication and social media strategy?
2. How Snapchat fits in with other social media channels (that Finnish Defence Forces is using)?
3. How can Snapchat be used to reach young conscripts?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using Snapchat?

In this chapter I will go through these questions and findings that the pilot has brought in terms of these topics.

6.5.1 Using Snapchat

Finnish Defence Forces' social media strategy defines conscripts as the first target group, and sharing Finnish Defence Forces and military service experiences by stories, pictures and videos as the third objective of social media. Snapchat fits well in with these requirements. Based on the pilot experiences, young conscripts are reached better in Snapchat than in any other social media channel, and Snapchat is a very efficient channel for sharing the military service experiences by stories, pictures and videos.

The goals for social media channels in Finnish Defence Forces are:

1. To communicate about Finnish Defence Forces' tasks
2. To share information openly, timely and reliably
3. To share Finnish Defence Forces and military service experiences by stories, pictures and videos
4. To optimize and lighten customer service by using the social media to reach big audiences and to have interaction.

(Puolustusvoimat sosiaalisessa mediassa 2014, 1)

Goal number 3, sharing military service experiences by stories, pictures and videos, should remain the only goal for Snapchat; it should not be used for other (than military stories) official Defence Forces' communication. If some general key messages are tried

to integrate as part of Snapchat, it might lose its authenticity and the young followers with it. The channel needs official guidance in terms of dividing the turns between units, encouraging conscripts to plan the content diversely, supporting them in their service when necessary and observing that nothing distasteful is published. But the guidance should not include, for example, requirements of certain viewpoints of the content. The conscripts should have the freedom to plan and implement the storytelling from their point of view. That is the strength of the channel, and that is how the maximum advantage of using Snapchat can be achieved.

This pilot and the feedback collected strongly supports the practice that Snapchat should be used by the conscripts and not by the communications staff. This practice is crucial in order to keep the young people as followers and to attract more young people to follow the channel. The purpose of Snapchat should continue to be telling authentic stories of everyday life of conscripts in service. The character of Snapchat supports authentic and realistic content produced by young people.

6.5.2 Part of social media toolkit

Finnish Defence Forces is already using many other social media channels. Most of them, (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn), are used by communications professionals. Only Inttielämää Instagram and Ruotuväki social media channels have previously been used by conscripts.

Facebook and Twitter are mainly used for sharing events, facts, press release information or other official organizational messages. Facebook is also used for sharing pictures of different events or war practices. Everything is published by professionals, and by the official standards of social media usage in the Defence Forces. LinkedIn is used for recruiting and building an employer image. Youtube is used for publishing professional videos, which often portray Finnish Defence Forces' performance and capacity. Instagram has been used for publishing pictures of military service and the different activities of the Finnish Defence Forces.

Snapchat, in this mix, is quite peculiar. It also needs guidelines, but as stated before, cannot be used by the same rules and practices as the other social media channels.

Snapchat should be seen as a bit separate channel, with certain target groups and a certain content. Whereas other social media channels, depending on the situation and content, can be used to communicate about Finnish Defence Forces' key messages,

Snapchat should not be used that way. The only message Snapchat should have, is the story of military service by the eyes of the conscripts in service.

In social media planning Snapchat should be handled separately. When planning themes, topics or events, one question should always be asked: “Does this affect the everyday life of a conscript in service?” If the answer is no, the whole theme should be dropped (for Snapchat). If the answer is yes, the topic can be pitched to the snapping conscripts, who eventually should have the power to say whether it is interesting for them or for the target audience. The conscripts should have strong influence over which topics they will cover in the content – they are the experts on what is going on in a conscript’s life and what is interesting to them or even to the young people in general.

Snapchat is a channel where you can charm your followers very fast but also lose them just as fast. If young people feel that this content is no longer relevant or interesting to them, they will unfollow the account. Forcing official communication to Snapchat is the surest way of accomplishing that.

Other social media channels are used nationwide, basically in every branch of defence and different units. For other channels it is possible: there can be many users at the same time. Snapchat needs turns and for that reason should have a reasonable number of users. The pilot indicates that three units are quite sufficient, but it might work with four units as well. Snapchat, at least for now, should remain as a small team channel with the main guidance responsibility in the Public Information Division at the Defence Command.

6.5.3 Reaching young conscripts

As I have already analyzed, especially Inttielämää Snapchat managed to reach young conscripts relatively well during the six-week pilot period. Even though thorough analyzes of Snapchat followers is quite impossible to achieve, I would say that most of the conscript followers are conscripts in service. They are an important part of the target group, but the channel should be marketed more to draftees.

In order to get more draftees to follow the account, Inttielämää Snapchat should be marketed at drafts and whenever Finnish Defence Forces is visiting, for example, schools. A campaign called “intti tutuksi” is going on at the moment, where almost every upper comprehensive school in Finland is visited and military service is being introduced to teenagers. Snapchat should be part of the marketing materials of that campaign.

Young women were surprisingly interested in Inttielämää Snapchat. We got a lot of questions about women's voluntary military service. It might be beneficial to rethink the importance of young women as a target group for Snapchat.

In addition to these target groups, also young reservists and some Defence Forces' staff are following Inttielämää Snapchat.

Ruotuväki has a different profile in Snapchat than Inttielämää. Ruotuväki is a newspaper and should use Snapchat as a media, not as conscripts in military. Of course Ruotuväki's Snapchat is updated by conscripts as well, but the content is different. Ruotuväki might not be able to attract as many followers as Inttielämää, but with individual style Ruotuväki can attract young conscripts as well. More about Ruotuväki Snapchat in recommendations.

6.5.4 Advantages and disadvantages of using Snapchat

Perhaps the biggest advantage with Snapchat is that it can really reach the young audience that Finnish Defence Forces has an interest and need to reach and communicate with. The channel also turned out to be very efficient in actually engaging young people: we received more messages daily in Snapchat than any other social media channel. Being in Snapchat also has a brand value, because it transmits an image of a modern, interactive organization that has adaptive communications.

From work time point of view, Snapchat doesn't strain communications' staff too much, because all the content is produced by conscripts. This is an important aspect in Finnish Defence Forces, because resources are scarce and the work is more demanding day by day. Snapchat doesn't require a lot of fancy equipment either, a smartphone is enough. But on the negative side, due to the strict information security requirements, the communications professionals can't have social media applications in their work phones, which makes mobile social media publishing impossible. This makes it also impossible for the local superiors to monitor what kind of content is published in Snapchat.

But with all the advantages and positive experiences, Snapchat still is a risky channel. Macnamara and Zerfass (2012, 13) discovered that the organizations viewed the loss of control over messages and image building as a major obstacle and a risk in social media. With conscripts using the organization's Snapchat accounts, there is even less control than with other social media channels. For example, in Facebook you can edit the posts afterwards or you can schedule posts so that someone can check them before they are

published. With Snapchat, there is no editing or pre-approving – this is the beauty and the horror of this channel. The only thing the organization can do is give training and then trust the snappers. But there is always a risk of unintentional overreaction or even intentional harm-doing. Even though the channel is used by conscripts, it is Finnish Defence Forces' channel and all the content is assumed to be aligned with the organization's views.

The fastness and temporary content is what makes Snapchat what it is, but it also makes it more difficult for the organization to monitor or analyze the communication. Because Snapchat doesn't give you any other information than the number of viewers in each snap, it's difficult to evaluate the results or reaching of goals. The goal that I set for Snapchat as a communications tool in the beginning of the pilot was to "tell real and ordinary stories from the military service and of conscripts' everyday life in order to reduce prejudice and false images and support realistic images or even create positive images". But how to measure this goal? How can we know if we've succeeded in reducing prejudice and supporting realistic or creating positive images? We get feedback in Snapchat, but that doesn't necessarily tell us if we've succeeded in our goals. Getting positive feedback about Snapchat only tells that our viewers like the content, but it doesn't tell how the content has affected their thoughts and views about military service.

The difficulty to analyze the communication achievements is perhaps the biggest challenge with Snapchat. One way of collecting information could be doing a survey for conscripts in service, where we would ask how many follow or have followed Finnish Defence Forces' Snapchat accounts and how the content has affected their views. This type of survey would need time and resources and should be done maybe after few years of using Snapchat.

Analyzing Snapchat communication is a function that needs improving. I consulted with the media analysts in the Public Information Division and we agreed that developing the ability to analyze Snapchat communication will get more attention in the future.

6.6 Practical guidelines for using Snapchat

One of the main points of piloting Snapchat was to learn how to use the channel and find out how to organize it in practice. There were few key findings during the pilot that helped forming practical guidelines for using Snapchat.

Snapping turns need to be divided between and agreed upon by the conscripts regularly.

Since only one user can be logged in Snapchat at a time, taking turns is the only way to do Snapchat in teams. If the snapping turns are not clear, nobody will produce content. When everyone knows when is their responsibility to snap, they also take time to think what to snap about. But even with turns, the system needs to be flexible so when needed, turns can be changed.

Even though the content shouldn't be too formal, content planning is needed.

Snapchat is a relaxed and spontaneous social media, but if you don't have any plans about the content, the odds are there will be nothing in it. This risk is high especially in the beginning of a new channel, because it's new and there isn't any practice for it yet. In Ruotuväki we combined Snapchat planning to our weekly editorial meetings, where we agreed who will do what story and go where for a gig. We decided who would snap when and from where, but the conscripts planned what they would snap and how.

Personalities affect the content, and that's okay.

More than other social media channels, Snapchat is very personal. You can produce content non-personal way, but it doesn't really work in Snapchat. Followers want to know who is snapping and what is happening in that person's day. But we have a variety of conscripts: others are naturals in Snapchat and others are not. Some people want to put their personalities in, have a certain style, and some people prefer to concentrate more on others, like interviewing other conscripts. Because we worked in teams, Snapchat looked different in different days depending on who was using it. This is how it works and there is no point trying to force a certain style on everyone. You just have to accept that somebody's style might even irritate you.

Nobody knows that you exist in Snapchat if you don't talk about it

People cannot find you by accident in Snapchat. They need to look for you by your user name, or take a picture of your Snapchat profile (they are all individual) to be able to follow you. So you need to think about how to market the profile. We published marketing posts in our other social media channels and or conscripts talked about it when going to different units for Ruotuväki gigs. Inttielämää Snapchat was marketed in the garrisons and in private Facebook groups of different units.

6.7 Recommendations for Snapchat

In this chapter I go through the recommendations for using Snapchat in Finnish Defence Forces.

Based on the experience and data collected during the pilot period, I recommend that Snapchat will be made an official channel of Finnish Defence Forces. Snapchat should be continued with the two existing accounts, *Ruotuväki* and *Inttielämää*. There should also be a possibility to decide about opening other accounts, for example for the National Defence University, if seen beneficial and purposeful.

6.7.1 Ruotuväki Snapchat

Ruotuväki Snapchat should be kept inside Ruotuväki and be updated by the conscripts serving in Ruotuväki. The account should be branded as a media Snapchat more than a Snapchat of Finnish Defence Forces. However, conscript angle is vital for Ruotuväki and should be given high importance when planning the content.

Ruotuväki's conscripts travel around Finland for stories and pictures. Using Snapchat during the gigs seems most natural, showing the followers behind-the-scenes in news gigs and stories. Short conscript interviews and, for example, news telegrams could fit well in the channel. Overall Ruotuväki Snapchat should be more edited than Inttielämää, but not too much – the character and authenticity of the channel has to be maintained.

Ruotuväki already uses many social media channels as promoting the newspaper and its content and building its own brand. Adding Snapchat is only natural for a newspaper that wants to reach young conscripts.

The guidance responsibility over Ruotuväki Snapchat should be with the associate online and social media editor, and ultimately with the editor-in-chief. Snapchat content planning should be kept as part of online and social media planning, as it has been already during the pilot period. Conscripts serving in Ruotuväki should plan the content in practice.

6.7.2 Inttielämää Snapchat

Because Inttielämää Snapchat was quite successful, I recommend it should be continued to be used the same way as during the pilot period. Three units, one from each branch of

defence, is a functional number of actors. However, adding one more unit could work as well. For example, the Army could benefit from having two snapping units, since it is the biggest branch and trains the most conscripts. The units don't have to be the same every year – each branch of defence could suggest their Snapchat units for example once or twice a year to have the responsibility to circulate, if they saw it purposeful. The change of snapping units should be done when new media conscripts are starting their media tasks, so in March or September.

Snapchat should continue to be updated by the conscripts serving in the chosen units. The goals set in the beginning of the pilot were functional and the goals and target groups were met. However young women should be added to the target group, since Inttielämää Snapchat clearly caught their interest. Reaching young women as well as young conscripts is beneficial for the Defence Forces: telling military stories can raise women's interest in completing voluntary military service. More women are needed, for example, in crisis management operations, so attracting more women to service is beneficial for recruiting women to crisis management operations.

Inttielämää Snapchat's content planning should happen by the conscripts using the Snapchat. However, each time the conscripts change, a training day should be organized to give the basis and guidelines for using Inttielämää Snapchat and going through the social media guidelines for conscripts and reservists, so that every snapping conscript knows the restrictions about taking pictures or using location settings in military areas. The conscripts serving as media conscripts change twice a year. The training day should be organized during that time, just before the older conscripts finish their service and the new conscripts take responsibility in Snapchat content. The training day would also be a good opportunity to gather feedback from the old media conscripts. The Public Information Division should be responsible for organizing the training day.

Inttielämää Snapchat should be guided by the Public Information Division, not by Ruotuväki.

I suggest that even though the guidance responsibility remains in the Public Information Division, local superiors are given a bigger role than during the pilot. Many of the conscripts said that they would have wanted to have stronger support for Snapchat planning and publishing from their local superiors.

6.8 End result

My recommendations for Snapchat were fully approved by the Communications Manager in September 2016. The only uncertain thing was the role of superiors: Public Information Division can't decide what are the media conscripts' local superiors' tasks. That decision is made locally in the units.

I wrote an official document signed by the Communications Manager, confirming that Snapchat will continue to be used. The guiding responsibility was removed from Ruotuväki to communications sector in the Public Information Division.

Finally, I introduced Ruotuväki and Inttielämää Snapchat pilots and channels at the Defence Forces' communications convention in October. Most of communications staff was present. Snapchat got a very positive response.

The result of the pilot was that I was able to define the practical guidelines for using Snapchat in Finnish Defence Forces and Snapchat was approved for official channel by the Communications Manager. However, Ruotuväki and Inttielämää Snapchats are not complete: they will continue to evolve.

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